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THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,865

TUESDAY 9 MARCH 1999

(1R50p) 45p

JOHN BIRT IS REVEILED AND RIDICULED. BUT HE'S RIGHT
IAN HARGREAVES
MEDIA, TUESDAY
REVIEW PAGE 12



SHEER ART ATTACK
UNVEILED: THE POLLOCK SHOW
REVIEW FRONT

Ramblers win 50-year battle

THE GOVERNMENT infuriated landowners and delighted ramblers yesterday by announcing new legal rights to walk over open countryside, which were far more radical than expected.

The long-promised "right to roam" - cherished target of the traditional Labour Left for half a century - was announced by Michael Meacher. The Environment minister said walkers will get for the first time a statutory right of access to between three and four million

acres of countryside in England and Wales, defined as mountain, moorland, heath, downland and registered common land.

Landowners, who greeted the proposals with fury, will be able to object to new local access forums, which it is hoped, Mr Meacher said, will reach consensus on access. If agreement could not be reached, compulsion will be used, making it a criminal offence to con-

tinue to block rights of access.

The new Countryside Agency being established for England this year and the Countryside Council for Wales, which will manage the forums county by county, will make the final decisions. They will map all the land covered by the new access, which could take years.

Mr Meacher told delighted Labour backbenchers the legislation would be brought in as soon as parliamentary time allowed as a "lasting tribute to the

memory of John Smith", the former Labour leader and a keen hillwalker.

Tony Blair was suspected of wanting to cave in to landowners' demands for more modest voluntary agreements, but pressure from the Environment Department, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Labour backbench support for the forthcoming private member's "Right to Roam" Bill by Gordon Prentice, the MP for Pendle, have convinced Downing Street

of the need for a more radical line.

Mr Meacher told MPs: "Over the past 50 years, a voluntary approach has delivered relatively little and, despite some commendable initiatives, there is little prospect of much new access being provided voluntarily in future. Only a new statutory right will deliver cost-effectively the extent and permanence of access we seek. We are convinced legislation is the only way to make sure people will be free in perpetuity to ex-

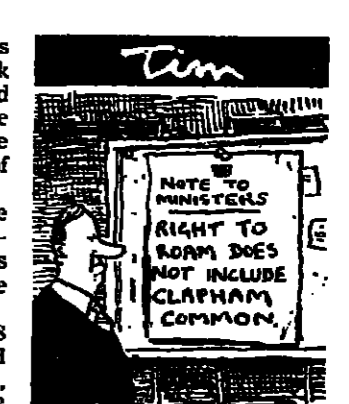
plore open countryside." Landowners could restrict access for up to 28 days each year for land management, such as heather burning or shooting. Other temporary or permanent closures might be made for nature conservation, protection of heritage sites, health and safety or defence.

Mr Meacher said the new Countryside Agency's first president would be Ewen Cameron, a Somerset landowner who is the immediate past president of the Country

Landowners Association. His successor as president, Norfolk landowner Ian MacNicol, said landowners would fight the move. He said: "We believe this to be the expropriation of private land rights."

Kate Ashbrook, head of the Ramblers' Association freedom to roam campaign, was "delighted" with what she called "an historic moment".

Parliament, page 8
Leading article and David Aaronovitch, Review, page 3



Flashguns and tears as 'that woman' hits town

THEY HAD queued for ages - the star-struck, the sad, and the merely curious. They thronged in their hundreds to see Monica Lewinsky. It was bound to come to tears, and of course, briefly, it did.

Some had been up before dawn. Others had elbowed their way to the front of the line that snaked around the books department at Harrods in London.

At the front, Anne Kersey, 39, a local Knightsbridge housewife, revealed with pride that she had also been the first to sign the Book of Condolence for Diana, Princess of Wales, at St James's Palace in September 1997. It was that sort of queue.

Ms Lewinsky was always going to be a big draw, but surely no one guessed that her appearance at the first signing of her biography, *Monica's Story*, would have been quite so mad. So hundreds of people were squeezed together, stumbling into books on the history of Cairo and Iranian art, as they

waited for the woman who called the United States President "butt-head" and to whom he referred as "that woman".

Timothy Harris, 33, of Sacramento, California, said: "I think she has been dragged through the wringer, so all power to her. If she gets a pound or two of mine from her book that is fine by me."

The object of Mr Harris's generosity appeared at 12.30pm with a nervous smile for the hundreds of flashguns. Ms Lewinsky signed copies for the first five people, then the cameras were cleared and she left the room.

There was a murmur in the queue. Was she all right? There was talk of her wiping away tears. Was she coming back?

Indeed she was. Twenty minutes later she reappeared, while the Harrods spokesman explained away her "touch of flu". With that, Ms Lewinsky took her seat at a large oak table and began with gusto to



The former White House intern Monica Lewinsky at Harrods yesterday to sign copies of 'Monica's Story', her official biography

Russell Boyce/Reuters

Brown to introduce energy tax on business

By COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

THE CHANCELLOR will announce plans today to tax the business use of gas, electricity and oil to raise an estimated £7bn and help Britain to meet its targets for reducing greenhouse gases.

Tony Blair met Gordon Brown twice yesterday to finalise the Budget package, adding to speculation that the Prime Minister intervened at an early stage to reduce the impact of tax changes on middle-class families.

But with most of the Budget papers already being printed, it is believed they were working on the final tone of the speech to be delivered to Parliament.

In one key development, Mr Brown will end the prevarication over an energy tax by act-

ing on the conclusions of the report by Lord Marshall of Knightsbridge, the chairman of British Airways, in favour of taxing big users of energy to help Britain meet multilateral emissions agreements. Labour's election manifesto pledged to

cut harmful carbon dioxide emissions, which produce global warming, by 2010.

Business leaders are worried that the tax will create an advantage for foreign competitors, but they are braced for the announcement and have privately indicated that their criticism will be muted.

But the measure will be welcomed by environmentalists. It forms part of the Chancellor's "green" strategy agreed with John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Brown will also announce a 6 per cent increase in fuel duties, underpinning Mr Prescott's efforts to persuade more commuters to abandon their cars and use public transport.

US share-owning, Business, page 16
Hamish McRae, Review, page 3

Police chief suspended over fatal shooting

By JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A CHIEF CONSTABLE was suspended last night after an inquiry into the fatal police shooting of a man as he stood naked by his bed.

Paul Whitehouse, 55, the highly respected head of Sussex Police, is now almost certain to face disciplinary action with his deputy, Mark Jordan, 40, in a case involving an unprecedented number of senior officers. Mr Jordan was suspended last month. Sussex police authority is still considering the case of an Assistant Chief Constable, Nigel Yeo.

The officers are understood to face disciplinary charges relating to providing misleading and inaccurate information. Their suspensions follow two inquiries into the death of James



Whitehouse: Tribunal

Whitehouse said that the officers had been investigating drug trafficking and the attempted murder of a man stabbed outside a pub. He said that the man they were after was considered "armed and dangerous". It later emerged that Mr Ashley, far from being a murder suspect, had pulled the assailant off the victim and may have saved a life.

An inquiry last year by Hampshire police examined how the inaccurate and damaging information came to be broadcast. A statement yesterday by Sussex police authority said: "The authority has resolved that disciplinary proceedings need be taken against ... Paul Whitehouse and ... Mark Jordan."

The Police Complaints Authority has been asked to approve the suspension.

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Implants filled with soy
oil are banned over fears
of toxic reactions
Home P3

Plan to tag children
Offenders aged 10 may
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Home P4

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Rivals line up in contest
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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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USA 7p

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55 من الامارات

Poison warning to 5,000 women as breast implant banned

Pressure on IRA to ease up arms save deal

From last week's...
...the Good Friday

...the Northern...
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...for a deal...
...administration...
...ordered that...
...get date...
...I hoped for a...
...April the...
...the Good Friday

BREAST IMPLANTS filled with soya oil given to 5,000 women to enhance their figures were withdrawn from sale yesterday because of fears that they could cause a toxic reaction.

The Health Department issued a warning over Trilucent implants, which have been on the market for four years, after receiving 74 reports of "adverse incidents". In some cases the implants ruptured, producing globules of an emulsified yoghurt-like substance causing swelling. In a few instances they "have become rancid and smelt".

Although all types of implant are liable to rupture, when oil leaks from the Trilucent implants it appears to react with the body, producing "biologically active substances".

About 8,000 women a year have breast implants. Experts said the number of soya-oil types was about one in six of the total. Around 70 per cent of Trilucent implants were done privately. NHS hospitals and clinics were told not to use any more and to return stocks.

The implants, introduced in 1995, were promoted by private cosmetic surgery clinics after scares about the safety of the older, silicone gel devices. However, silicone implants have been cleared after two government inquiries and an independent review.

David Sharpe, chairman of the Breast Special Interest Group of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons, said: "It is quite worrying for patients with the implants, because they are the ones scared about silicone gel, so they are more sensitive to the issue." In cases where the oil leaked and formed the "emulsified product like yoghurt" which collected in the breast, it could cause inflammation. "It's a natural oil put in an unnatural place and it's not behaving in the way they thought it would," Jeremy Met-

ters, deputy Government Chief Medical Officer, said all women with the implants should consult their doctor for advice but there was no need for them to take immediate action unless they experienced symptoms. "There has been no evidence of permanent injury or harm to health. However, on the precautionary principle we consider that no more of these devices should be implanted."

Dr Metters said investigations were continuing so that further advice could be given to women who already had the implants. For women who are worried, the Health Department has set up a help line, which will be open for the next three days, on 0800 004440.

The latest warning will renew fears about the safety of all breast implants, which have been the subject of multi-million lawsuits in Britain and the US.

The warning was issued by the Medical Devices Agency, which tests medical equipment. In advice to the Health Department it said investigation of the implants had found that the chemical breakdown of the oil leaking into the breast was "significantly different" from that predicted during pre-clinical testing. "This breakdown results in some biologically active substances, the toxicology of which has not been adequately evaluated."

The swelling associated with rupture of the implants could be due to local inflammatory response. "The local swelling is believed to resolve once the ruptured implant has been removed."

Vicki Allanach, adviser on women's health to the Royal College of Nursing, said: "It is an anxious time for women but this is a very small number of



Elaine Coomber wonders whether to leave in her soya oil implants or have them removed. Peter Macdiarmid

implants. We should not get it out of proportion."

The implants are manufactured by the Swiss company Lipomatrix. Before its purchase by Sierra Medical Technologies in November it was a subsidiary of Collagen Aesthetics International, the UK suppliers. Lipomatrix and Collagen Aesthetics issued a joint statement saying that Trilucent implants had "a very good safety profile".

David Cooper, managing director of Transform, the country's market leader in cosmetic surgery, said women who had received soya-oil implants should not panic. "Like everyone else, we are awaiting to

hear from the Medical Devices Agency to see what the next step will be... I have received assurances from the Department [of Health] that there is no reason to panic. This is a precautionary measure taken because people's health comes first."

Mr Cooper said Transform would arrange for worried clients who had received Trilucent implants to get reassurance from the surgeons who had carried out their operations. According to Transform, the demand for Trilucent implants has decreased recently as women have become less worried about the danger of silicone.

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BEFORE **AFTER**

An advert for Transform's breast implant surgery

'I was ill and in pain... I wanted them removed'

ELAINE COOMBER accepted the advice of her cosmetic surgeon four years ago to replace the silicone implants she had had for 20 years with the Trilucent soya bean oil devices.

Now the fears about silicone she thought she had put behind her have returned to haunt her after yesterday's government health warning about the new implants.

"I was told they were a safer alternative. I can't believe I had it done. But at the time I felt confident in the surgeon."

Miss Coomber, 53, of Hextable, Kent, said she was shocked by the news that the implants had been banned. "But I am not surprised because of the stories I have heard of other women having problems. My advice to women is, if you don't have symptoms, don't panic, if you do, go to a doctor."

In 1995, Miss Coomber set up a self-help group, Survivors of Silicone, after experiencing persistent problems with her original implants, which ruptured and adhered to her breast tissue. "I had had children and I decided I wanted an uplift. I was lucky the implant was small. If it had been larger I don't know what might have happened."

"I had been having problems with leakage of the silicone and then I heard stories about other problems. I was ill and had pain in the breast area. I decided I wanted them removed because I was worried."

Her new implants brought little improvement, however, and she now faces the decision of whether to leave them in place or have them removed. "They have been painful ever since. The question I would like to ask the Health Department is why they didn't do proper testing before they let them on to the market."

David Sharpe, professor of plastic surgery at Bradford Royal Infirmary and an expert on breast implants, said the concerns about silicone were unfounded and that new implants using other materials had been marketed to frightened women in an aggressive manner.

"It is very alarming for women. Many will want to be re-implanted. I don't use them [soya bean implants] because I strongly believe in silicone. If a patient doesn't trust me enough to use silicone I would rather send them elsewhere."

Silicone gel breast implants were banned in the US in 1991 after a series of court cases claiming they caused connective tissue damage and a range of other conditions. However, subsequent investigations have failed to demonstrate a link between the implants and disease and they have never been banned in Britain.

FROM SILICONE TO SOYA: TYPES OF IMPLANTS



Pamela Anderson: New breasts and collagen lips

Silicone gel: the commonest implant, in use since 1962 but banned from cosmetic surgery after a health scare. Replaced after two Government inquiries and an independent review.

Cohesive silicone gel: more jelly-like and slightly firmer. Saline: filled with salt water, commonly used in the US. The shape and feel are less realistic than silicone gel and the outer case can crease or wrinkle. Deflation after a rupture - said to occur in one in 10 cases - is usually instant.

Hydrogel: sugar, starch and water in a jelly-like state, a synthetic version is available. Offers a more natural effect, but there could be 'rippling'. Cancer screening can be complicated.

Soya Bean Oil: a natural product in use since 1993 thought (until now) to be safe. The filling is a natural fat, which is excreted naturally if there is a rupture. Less realistic than silicone, it is "radiolucent", breast tissue is not hidden during screening.



Jane Fonda: Facelift and breast implants

Stone faces flood of lawsuits

THE UNITED States Supreme Court opened the way for a possible barrage of lawsuits against the film *Natural Born Killers* and its director, Oliver Stone, after it ruled yesterday that Mr Stone's right to free artistic expression did not protect him from allegations that the teenage killing spree depicted in his movie incited real-life violent crimes.

For four years, the family of a Louisiana woman shot and paralysed in her convenience store by two teenage runaways has sought to obtain damages from the makers of the film but has been challenged at every turn by the defendants, who claim that depictions of violence on film are protected by the First Amendment of the US Constitution. The Supreme



Harrelson and Lewis

have incited "imminent lawless activity".

In the Louisiana case, the store-owner, Patsy Ann Byers, was attacked by the teenage daughter of an Oklahoma judge and her boyfriend who, according to the plaintiffs, staged an armed robbery on the store shortly after seeing *Natural Born Killers* on video.

The ruling could have broad repercussions for filmmakers in general, who have weathered severe criticism from politicians and the families of crime victims but have never yet had to answer in court for their depictions of violence on screen.

Natural Born Killers has been dogged by controversy since its release in 1994. Starring Juliette Lewis and Woody

Harrelson as a pair of deranged teenagers sinking deeper and deeper into graphic violence, it has been accused of spawning copy-cat crimes in the US, France and Britain. In the wake of the Dunblane massacre in 1996, Warner Bros decided to suspend its UK video release indefinitely.

Mr Stone has always defended the film, saying it examines the very problem that it is said to personify - the relationship between suggestive, violent images on screen, and actual flesh-and-blood violence. The film uses several techniques, notably fast cutting and video footage, to underline this theme, and shows the couple becoming grimly fascinated with their own portrayal on the television news.

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Tagging of child offenders planned

ELECTRONIC TAGGING devices are to be fitted to children as young as 10 under proposals being considered by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw.

The controversial plan to introduce child tagging nationally has been drawn up by the Government's Youth Justice Board in response to an anticipated explosion in the number of young people being locked up by the courts.

The board yesterday presented Mr Straw with a 50-page

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

report on juveniles in custody, which predicts that the numbers of such youngsters will increase by 1,564 to 4,275 by the year 2003, a rise of 58 per cent.

It also proposes that girls should be mixed with boys in a planned new network of child jails, provided that "girls are not in a small minority".

Girls of 17, who are currently held in adult women's

prisons, should be removed and placed in juvenile units.

The report calls for the new home detention curfew - which allow adult prisoners nearing the end of their sentence to go home early provided they wear a tag - to be extended to offenders aged 16 and 17.

It is hoped that this will reduce the numbers in young offenders' institutions. Tagging for those aged 10 to 15 would aim to keep youngsters off the streets by imposing strict curfew conditions, in line with court orders. The idea is being tried in Norfolk and Greater Manchester.

Lord Warner, the Home Office adviser who chairs the board, said yesterday: "It looks as though this will offer a promising alternative for some offenders. Assuming they work well, we will want to extend their use."

A Youth Justice Board spokeswoman said that the child-tagging projects would be fully evaluated next year. No obvious flaws have emerged though some fears remain about how such devices are viewed in the school playground.

"We don't know whether a tag is seen as a stigma or a badge of honour," she said.

In Greater Manchester, 50 children aged between 10 and 15 have been given electronic tags, monitored by Securix Custodial Services. They are worn to school and throughout

the day and become active during the hours of curfew, triggering an alarm if the child leaves home.

Harry Fletcher, of the National Association of Probation Officers, said that the idea was flawed.

He said: "What you have got is unruly children who invariably come from undisciplined families. To work, it will need the parents to exert influence over the child, which it appears they are not able to do."

The plans to mix girls and boys in secure units also raised serious concerns among penal reformers.

Frances Crook, director of the Howard League, said: "Most of these girls are highly vulnerable."

"They are often drug addicts who may well have been abused by males throughout their lives. You have to treat these factors with enormous respect."

But the report states: "There is no reason in principle why girls and boys should not be held together in the same establishment, provided that there are high levels of staffing and a reasonable gender balance."

Earlier, at yesterday's Youth Justice Board conference, Mr Straw announced a grant of £50m over three years for the second phase of the board's funding for programmes that change the behaviour of young criminals.

Librarians in 'below stairs' revolt

OUTSIDE THE British Library, Evan Eabry, a PhD student, was grappling with the striking staff's startling revelations of conditions underground.

While the intellectuals sit in comfort in the swish reading rooms on the huge, new library's upper floors, staff picketing the building yesterday claimed that in the bowels of the building they are forced to toil like men down the mines.

Mr Eabry wondered if the beautiful, pristine £520m establishment at St Pancras in central London could be compared to Fritz Lang's 1927 cult science-fiction movie *Metropolis*, in which a faceless, lumpenproletariat slaves underground, servicing the rich living in luxury above.

After all, said Mr Eabry, a student at the London School of Economics, he had no idea what went on four floors beneath the ground. He just waited for the workers to deliver books in the library's promised record time.

No records were being broken yesterday. The reading rooms, which attract hundreds of academics every day, were closed. Even Germaine Greer, determined not to cross a picket line, cancelled the launch party for her new book, *The Complete Woman*, last night. Yesterday, leaflets criticising conditions were all the workers

BY MARY BRAID

were delivering on a 60-strong picket line. So yes, they admitted, library staff could stand up on the library's lower floors. But these floors - where 12 million books are stored in rooms as large as football pitches - had nothing in common with the library's stunning surface entrance with its huge atrium of creamy Portland stone.

According to Public and Commercial Services Union officials, workers have to cope with artificial light, extreme temperatures and constant deafening noise from the mechanical book-sorting system. And a huge increase in users adds to pressure.

"All you ever see is the beautiful bits of the building," one picket said. "The architects certainly did not have us in mind when they designed the building." The strike, he said, was called because plans to split the workers into two grades would result in some spending more time below.

The decision by the British Library to close the reading rooms for a week was a blow to some people. Trudie Gorr had just flown in from Australia to spend a week in the famous reading rooms researching for her PhD thesis on Roman history. Yesterday the Melbourne



Pickets at the British Library in central London yesterday. They say working on the lower floors is like being down a mine. Andrew Busman

University student was trying to find out if the strike would really continue all week.

"It is a bit disappointing," she said, laughing at the understatement. "My history professor used the library just before Christmas and thought it was

just fantastic. He said I just had to come and use it. It is a long way to come and not get in."

The library which opened 18 months ago, years late and millions of pounds over budget, was taking no blame for the strike. Jane Carr, director of public af-

fairs, said that talk of mining-like conditions was a "ridiculous" distraction. "The rooms do go four floors down but they are white, light, high-ceilinged and airy, a great improvement on conditions in the old library."

The dispute, she said, had nothing to do with conditions. It centred on the library's attempts to negotiate more flexible working hours to allow longer opening hours.

Ms Carr admitted that there would be less staff rotation between the lower and upper

floors if a proposed new grading system was introduced. But those on the lower floors, she insisted, "regularly come up for air". Not often enough, according to the workers. Yesterday was just the start of a month of industrial action.

The crash was at the Tottill roundabout on the northbound carriageway, near Burghclere, on the Hampshire/Berkshire border. A police helicopter took the youth to the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. Five other vehicles crashed amid the debris on the carriageway.

The minibus was from a school in the Midlands. The woman driver of the other car, a Rover Metro, was unhurt.

The carriageway was closed for almost an hour while the wreckage was cleared, causing massive tailbacks.

The boy of nine who escaped with minor injuries in a crash that killed his father, mother and teenage sister on Sunday was named yesterday as Mark Thompson. His father Philip Thompson, 41, mother Carol, 42, and sister Jayne, 14, died when their Land Rover Discovery collided with a lorry near Swallow, north Lincolnshire.

15 hurt in school minibus crash

BY GARY FINN

A TEENAGER was flown to hospital with serious head injuries yesterday after a school minibus overturned in a collision with a car on the Newbury bypass.

Two teachers and 12 children aged 15 to 18 were also hurt. Ambulance crews who took them to North Hampshire Hospital at Basingstoke said they were "walking wounded".

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Children give up on the classics

CHILDREN ARE reading more than they were a generation ago but have abandoned 19th-century classics in favour of Roald Dahl and Sue Townsend.

In the Seventies, the favourite book for 10 to 14-year-olds was *Little Women* by Louisa M. Alcott. In the Nineties, it is Dahl's *The BFG*. The only author to maintain a commanding position in both decades was Enid Blyton.

The findings, from a survey of nearly 8,000 children by researchers at Nottingham University, will be published on Thursday in a new book, *Children's Reading Choices*. Dr Christine Hall and Dr Martin Coles replicated a study done at Sheffield University in 1971. On average, children of all ages surveyed in 1994-95 had read 2.52 books each in the month before the survey, compared with 2.39 in 1971. Only among 14-year-old boys has the amount of reading declined.

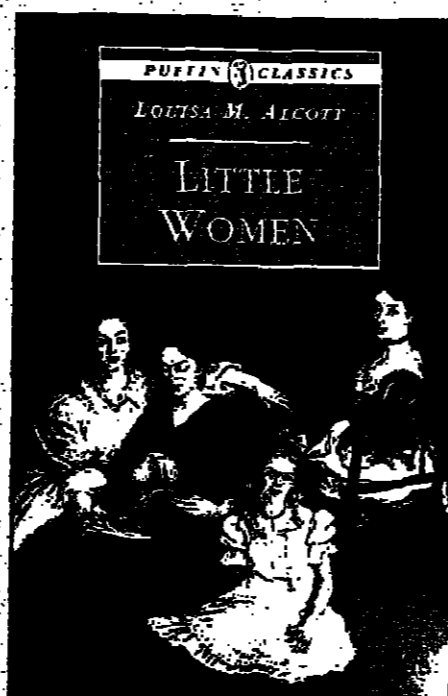
Dr Coles said yesterday: "There has been a big expansion in writing and marketing of books for children. They are getting more choice and they are choosing contemporary books. Children are buying books in supermarkets and at newsagents, and the cover of a Point Horror book looks more appealing than a Dickens."

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

"But a lot of classics are still being read: one in six among our top 200 is what most adults would consider a classic, often connected with a TV series. "Children's taste in books is amazingly eclectic. One girl had read an Enid Blyton, *Cinderella*, a book on *Having a Baby* and a *Beginners' Guide to Feminism* in the previous month."

C.S. Lewis appears in the top 20 favourite authors for all ages in both surveys. Charles Dickens and Agatha Christie have slipped back in the Nineties but are still among the 30 most popular authors.

FAVOURITE READING OF THE 1970S



Top ten books for 12-year-olds in the Seventies

Little Women
Black Beauty
Treasure Island
Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe
Jane Eyre
Heidi
Oliver Twist
The Secret Seven
The Silver Sword
Tom Sawyer



Top ten books for 12-year-old girls in the Nineties

Louisa M. Alcott
Anna Sewell
R. L. Stevenson
C. S. Lewis
Charlotte Brontë
Johanna Spyri
Charles Dickens
Enid Blyton
Ian Serrallier
Mark Twain

FAVOURITE READING OF THE 1990S



Top ten books for 12-year-old boys in the Nineties

Roald Dahl
Roald Dahl
Roald Dahl
Various
Sue Townsend
Rene Goscinny
Michael Crichton
Roald Dahl
Roald Dahl
J. R. R. Tolkien

Bestsellers such as Harry Potter did not come out in time to be included. The authors argue: "A strong case can be made for the importance of ensuring that children are introduced to classic texts in schools since they do not fea-

ture prominently in their voluntary reading choices." Among older pupils, the comics of the Seventies have given way to magazines and newspapers. More 12-year-olds (18 per cent) read *The Sun* than *The Beano* (12 per cent). By the

age of 10, 12 per cent of children are reading *The Sun*. Just 17 is the most popular magazine for teenage girls. In the Seventies, it was *Jackie*. Teenage girls' magazines today assume a "sexual knowl-

edge" that adults may find uncomfortable but not more so than an evening's television viewing, says the book. They are also "textually quite rich" and "potentially educational". Boys are reading more magazines than they did 25 years

ago: their favourites cover football and computers. Dr Coles said: "Schools need to recognise what children read out of school. Boys who say they can't read are reading periodicals densely packed with information and statistics."

Schools put too much emphasis on narrative," he suggested. "He suggested that the diet of narrative girls thrived on at school might not equip them for work. *Children's Reading Choice* by Christine Hall and Martin Coles. Routledge. £12.99.

Ingham bound over to keep the peace

ON THE COURT schedule he was listed simply as Mr Bernard Ingham, stripped of his knightship with one stroke of a clerk's pen. And when he sat down, only his bushy grey eyebrows were visible over the edge of the dock.

All in all, yesterday's appearance before Croydon magistrates should have been a humbling experience for Lady Thatcher's former press secretary. But Sir Bernard - as he should properly be described -

BY KATHY MARKS

emerged from it completely unchastened.

Charged with criminal damage to a neighbour's Mercedes, he agreed to be bound over to keep the peace for 12 months. But he still proclaimed his innocence, said he regretted nothing and portrayed himself as the victim of a miscarriage of justice.

It was a quintessential English neighbour's dispute that

caused Sir Bernard's "unfortunate descent into disgraceful conduct", as Julius Capon, the prosecuting solicitor, put it yesterday.

For 11 years he had been engaged in a bitter feud with Barry Cripps, a builder, and his wife, Linda, who live next door to him in Monahan Avenue, a tree-lined suburban street in Purley, Surrey.

Sir Bernard, 66, has objected to a series of home improvements, including the

building of a sauna hut in the Cripps's back garden. But it was a row over rights of way at the back of his detached bungalow that made him finally blow his top in December, the court heard yesterday.

Espying Mr Cripps stray on to his land while reversing a silver Mercedes SLK into a garage, Sir Bernard "started to shout and gesticulate". He then allegedly kicked the car and, when Mrs Cripps drew his attention to this, replied:

"Good, I'm glad." Croydon Constabulary, summoned to the scene, were left in no doubt as to the stature of the man with whom they were dealing. When charged, the defendant enquired of them, haughtily: "Are you sure you want to do this?"

Sir Bernard, a broadcaster and columnist described his solicitor, Graham Pithouse, as "a person perhaps of some substance", as he glowered at the courtroom while his alleged sins were recounted.

But as someone not usually shy of voicing an opinion, he was strangely taciturn. Told by Ray Dann, chairman of the magistrates, that he was to be bound over to the sum of £1,000, he nodded curtly: "Is that a 'yes'?" asked Mr Dann, sharply. "Yes, it is," replied Sir Bernard.

Afterwards, on the steps of the court building, he exuded defiance. "It is ironic that I am here, because I have sought over 11 years of problems to up-

hold decent people's rights and the planning system," he said. "But that's life."

In an unexpected development, Sir Bernard later delivered a cheque for £792 to the Cripps family to cover the damage that he denied he had caused.

Mr Cripps said: "We are weary of the constant bombardment that we have suffered. We are no match for Sir Bernard Ingham. Let's hope that he will now allow us to get



Ingham: Unchastened

on with our lives peacefully." Given their opponent's track record, that seems highly unlikely.

And finally, a safe, dull start despite the graphics

FIRST NIGHT ITV EVENING NEWS

EVER SINCE Kirsty Young came out from behind her desk on Channel 5 news, other television news operations have been worrying that they look too stuffy and formal - hence the uncomfortable sight of Jon Snow and Kirsty Lang on Channel 4 news lounging awkwardly in armchairs and wondering what to do with their hands.

With the revamping of ITV's news operation - "A new era for ITV", as the continuity announcer modestly put it - it was a fair bet that we would be getting something a little more relaxed, a little less starched. Trevor McDonald perched on a bar stool, sipping a Scotch and drawing on a tab, or with Val Doonican-style rocking chair and jumper.

In fact, Trevor did come out from behind the desk, but only for a few seconds after the commercial break, to introduce a story about teenage girls smoking: a tantalising flash of trouser rather than the



Trevor McDonald's broadcast of the new ITV news

Full Monty. It was left to the ITN economics correspondent to step out and perform a dainty *pas de deux* with a computerised image of the Chancellor's red box as it scooted around the screen - this was apparently intended as a way of taking the viewer's mind off what she had to say about today's Budget.

Otherwise, the innovations consisted of a new, more spa-

ciuous look to the studio, and rotating computer graphics, with the kind of rotating globe that the satirical TV programme *The Day Today* poked fun at. Mostly, though, it was business as usual: still starting with the bongs, though not as many of them, obviously, and still ending with "And Finally". In between, there was a half-hearted attempt to create a sense of occasion, with an ex-

clusive interview with Gordon Brown: the Chancellor expanded on Sunday's remarks about a Budget for the family, adding that it would also help jobs and enterprise.

And, scoop, the first pictures of the failed British round-the-world balloon attempt crashing into the Pacific - this sounded a more spectacular than it looked. The adventurous theme continued with the "And Finally", which had David Hempleman-Adams preparing to walk, unaided, to the magnetic North Pole.

The spirit of adventure did not communicate itself to the ITN news team. Reporting from Argentina on the Prince of Wales' impending visit, Nicholas Owen concluded that it might indeed be "sensitive in parts", while Katie Derham, discussing Monica Lewinsky's tour of British bookshops, predicted that: "This American woman faces enormous interest from the British public."

All in all, as new eras in broadcasting go, this one looked very safe and very dull. ROBERT HANKS

Martians found in meteorite

SCIENTISTS HAVE discovered that Martians do exist. A life form has been uncovered in Antarctica that has been feeding on "Martian food" for many thousands of years.

The organism is a common terrestrial microbe that has lived deep inside the cracks of a Martian meteorite, which fell to earth 13,000 years ago, landing on an ice-sheet at the South Pole. Scientists believe the microbe has lived off the meteorite's organic carbon molecules, which originated when Mars had liquid water, and possibly life, of its own.

"Under the principle you are what you eat," it could be described as a Martian," said Dr

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

Andrew Steele, a British scientist who made the find while working at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Dr Steele left Britain two years ago to work with the scientists at the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) who announced in 1996 that they had found signs of life on the Martian meteorite known as ALH84001.

But instead of finding a Martian microbe, Dr Steele came across a type of terrestrial bacteria belonging to a group called the Actinomyces, a common microbe found almost

everywhere on the planet. "It must have lived deep inside the rock and could only have got its food source of carbon from the meteorite itself. It is the only known organism on earth which has been eating Martian food," Dr Steele said.

The results of the two-year investigation into the ALH84001 meteorite will be released next week at the Lunar and Planetary Science Conference in Houston, where Nasa scientists will continue to argue that the meteorite shows genuine signs of extra-terrestrial life.

Dr Steele, who analysed the meteorite using sophisticated microscopy techniques, said the microbe was overlooked in

the past because scientists had been using inappropriate detection methods.

"In the particular case of ALH84001, a terrestrial organism went undetected by all the techniques that claim to be able to detect life," he said.

Meteorites from Antarctica were once thought to be free from earthly contamination because of the pristine state of the frozen continent, but this is no longer the case. The discovery of the microbe could be bad news for Nasa scientists in search of genuine Martians. It will make it more difficult to convince a sceptical world that their meteorite evidence of life is truly out of this world.

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Baby killed by 'tired' doctor's error

A NEWBORN baby died because a tired doctor missed out a decimal point when prescribing a heart-slowing drug, an inquest was told yesterday.

Dr Christian Slabbert told police his failure to "retain the decimal point" more than 14 hours into a 24-hour shift led to Benjamin Adams receiving a massive overdose of the cardiac drug Digoxin.

BY RACHEL CROFTS

The South African doctor told the baby's parents, Carl and Tina Adams, he was "sorry" when he appeared at the inquest in Kidderminster, Worcestershire.

Dr Slabbert, who now works in Arkansas, in the United States, refused to answer questions on the advice of his barrister, but when asked by the Adams' family solicitor, Paul

Balen, if he wished to say anything to the parents, he replied simply: "I'm sorry".

Tina Adams, 26, who now has a nine-month-old son, broke down as the doctor left the witness box.

Benjamin was just a few hours old when he was given 10 times the recommended dose of Digoxin at Alexandra hospital, Redditch, in April 1997. The blunder happened after the

baby developed respiratory problems and a fast heart beat shortly. He had been born by Caesarean section on 25 April.

Doctors at the hospital's paediatric department sought advice from cardiologists at Birmingham Children's Hospital, who recommended the drugs adenosine and Digoxin.

Adenosine was to be prescribed at a rate of 100 mcg per kilogram of the baby's weight

and Digoxin at 10 mcg per kilogram, the inquest heard.

The dosage was written on the patient notes by the senior physician, Dr Neil Kamal. Dr Bridget Wilson and Dr Slabbert were left to write up the prescription, the hearing was told.

The adenosine was administered by Dr Wilson and began to improve the baby's condition.

The Digoxin was then administered by nursing staff

working from the prescription written by Dr Slabbert. In a statement to police at the time of the incident, Dr Slabbert, 38, said he had been tired when he made the mistake, and was on his second 24-hour shift during the week of the death.

The statement read: "I had had a demanding day. I was on duty for a 24-hour period. There was a degree of tension due to the bed and staff shortage."

The doctor, who told police he had "no real experience" of prescribing intravenous cardiac drugs, was called to several births, received referrals from GPs and attended to patients in casualty during his shift, before being required to write the prescription.

He told police: "I then made the calculation but inadvertently failed to retain the decimal point."

"I was quite tired, having been on duty since 9am the previous morning and working continually without much of a break. I had not even been able to have an evening meal."

The Alexandra Healthcare Trust has admitted liability to the family of Fir Trees Close, Batchley, Redditch, have received £7,500 compensation, the maximum payout for the death of a child.

Cabbies in revolt over imposition of 48-hour week

BY DARIUS SANAI

BY THE Great Plague burial pit next to Smithfield Market in London, William Hayter was outlining a prophecy of doom: a capital city where taxis are near-impossible to find and prohibitively expensive.

Mr Hayter, talking between sips of tea, was imagining what might happen if the European Commission goes ahead with plans to regulate taxi-drivers to a 48-hour week. "I'm sure a lot of the drivers would have to leave the business and the costs would inevitably be passed on to the customers," Mr Hayter said from the driver's seat of his taxi.

A typical four-mile journey now costs £10 on a weekday. Fares could rise sharply under the proposed regulations.

Once, if a passenger desired an animated soliloquy from the driver, he would have to bring up the subject of immigrants, or cyclists. The latest pet hate, though, is the European Commission, which wants to bring taxi-drivers in line with other workers subject to an average maximum 48-hour week, and restrict the hours they can work at the most lucrative times of all, the evening shifts.

News of the plans is just reaching London's 17,000 licensed black-cab drivers and, according to those outside



David Lane: Golden days of cabbies are receding

Beppe's Cafe by Smithfield Market, the result could be rather more tangible than a general upturn in front-seat xenophobia.

Under this nightmarish scenario, black-cab drivers would be more reluctant than ever to take passengers south of the river, thousands of cabbies would go out of business and, as fathers discourage sons from following in their tyre tracks, the basis of one of London's most enduring traditions would be jeopardised.

"You just wouldn't be able to afford to buy a new cab," said Aubrey Saffer, who has been driving taxis for 30 years. "Young

people who don't own their own cabs and have mortgages to pay off would suffer the most; it just wouldn't be profitable." The cost of self-regulation, by attaching tachographs to meters, and the attendant bureaucracy, would also be passed on to the passengers.

Black-taxi drivers are all self-employed, either owning or hiring their cabs and choosing their working hours to suit themselves.

Many, particularly younger drivers determined to make quick money, work more than 60 hours a week, much of it at the peak times of Friday and Saturday nights.

The average earnings for a London cabbie are £12 to £16 an hour. It is higher on lucrative journeys but is balanced out by time spent waiting at airports and stations or cruising at quiet periods.

With a new taxi costing £28,000, and a five-year-old one costing £190 a week to hire, with added maintenance costs, cabbieing is not the lucrative trade it once was.

As Mr Saffer said: "It used to be a great trade but there are so many other ways celebrities and interesting people get around now. It's not what it was and I wouldn't advise my sons to do it. The regulations would make it even more difficult."



William Hayter, a London cabbie, believes the working hours regulations would make taxis scarce and prohibitively expensive John Voos

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Beware the brochure-speak for a true guide to holidays

WHEN IT comes to picking a holiday, it is not what the brochure says, but what it does not, that can trip up the unwary, according to a new report.

True, your room may well have "stunning views", but they may be of a wasteland of concrete and scaffolding. "Ideally situated" may mean there is indeed a beach on one side - but there is also a council tip on the other. And for "lively", read "a distinct possibility of lager-swilling teenagers throwing up with disco music blaring all night in the background".

In fact, holidaymakers are being subjected to "wildly misleading" descriptions of the kind of resorts and hotels they can expect from travel companies, according to the Consumers' Association magazine, *Holiday Which?* It said: "We found the biggest problems are not the euphemisms and the

BY KIM SENGUPTA

purple prose, but the omissions and economies with the truth."

One who would agree is Peter Kilfoyle, the minister for public services. He is taking Thomson, Britain's biggest tour operator, to court to claim compensation for a family holiday allegedly ruined by a number of features not in the brochure. These included a flight being delayed and re-routed, and a half-finished hotel.

Mr Kilfoyle, whose ministerial post makes him responsible for the government charter-mark project, which sets standards for organisations, also claimed that a letter of complaint went unanswered, telephone calls were put through to disconnected lines and correspondence was lost. *Holiday Which?* has published

a crash course in "brochure speak" to aid the unwary. This includes: "developing or fast-expanding" - noisy and dusty, with building works everywhere; "ever more popular" - even noisier and more crowded than last year; "due for completion" - still being built; "just off the main road" - traffic within a few feet.

Patricia Yates, editor of the magazine, said: "You should be able to rely on brochure descriptions, but our research has shown that frequently the brochures are keeping people in the dark." The Consumers' Association advises holidaymakers to consider making claims if their experience does not match the brochure description and to be persistent with their complaints.

Trawling through hotels and resorts, the report said: "Every now and then we come across

a hotel that's beyond belief. The Horizontes Copey Resort in Varadero, Cuba, is one such place. The complaints of the guests beside the pool ranged from 'It's like a council block beside the M25' to 'Our holiday turned into the the biggest and most expensive disappointment we have ever had'."

In Crete, it is true that the Irene Apartments in Stalis is "just off the main road", as Sun, set Holidays say. But *Holiday Which?* says that it is only "too true" - because, in fact, sitting by the pool, you are a mere 35 feet from endless streams of traffic.

The King Minos Palace hotel in Heraklion is, according to First Choice, "just 200 metres away" from the beach and, for Sunworld, "just a 10-minute walk". In reality it is a 300-yard slog from the beach back to the hotel up a steep hill.

IN BRIEF

Kubrick died of natural causes

STANLEY KUBRICK, 70, died of natural causes at his home in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, a post-mortem examination found yesterday. The film director, whose credits include *A Clockwork Orange* and *2001*, had just completed his latest project, *Eyes Wide Shut*.

Courts 'powerless' in Fayed case

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL told three appeal judges yesterday that the courts have no power to try the Harrods owner, Mohamed al-Fayed, for libel in an action brought by the former Conservative MP Neil Hamilton, because a finding by Parliament could not be questioned.

Jolly conductor on the right track

A CHURCHY train conductor has been told he can carry on brightening up passengers' journeys despite a manager complaining that he was not sticking to announcement guidelines. Bob Anderson, 35, from Newcastle, greets people on Northern Spirit trains in six languages.

The flavour of Britain

ORDNANCE SURVEY this week launches its *Gazetteer of Great Britain*, the most comprehensive yet with 258,000 place names - dozens with a culinary flavour such as Pudding Pie Nook in Lancashire, Mushroom Green in the West Midlands and Hungry Hill in South Ayrshire.

\$1.2bn fraudster begins appeal

BY KIM SENGUPTA

THE MAN jailed for 14 years for breaking the Bank of Credit and Commerce International took his case to the Court of Appeal yesterday.

Abbas Gokal, a Pakistani-born shipping tycoon, had siphoned off \$1.2bn in the \$20bn collapse.

He was found guilty of fraud and false accounting at the Old Bailey in 1997 after a 122-day trial that cost £4.5m. Gokal, 62, was also ordered to pay £2.9m within two years, or face three more years in prison.

One of the main grounds for the appeal are the circumstances under which Gokal ended up in court. He was arrested in July 1994 in Frankfurt, Germany, when his flight from Karachi to the US stopped for refuelling.

Sources stated at the time that the district attorney's of

fice in New York had offered him a plea bargaining deal and were said to be furious at the Serious Fraud Office. John Moscow, New York assistant district attorney, had written to Gokal's lawyers: "I have spoken to the prosecuting authorities in the United Kingdom. They tell me that they have no current plans to arrest Mr Gokal when he meets with us."

Gokal's Gulf Group, a Middle East-based shipping company, was the biggest borrower from BCCI. He and his two brothers, Mustafa and Muraza, who are living in Pakistan, once controlled more than 100 vessels.

Gokal's appeal is led by Alun Jones QC, who acts for the government of Spain and is one of Britain's foremost authorities on extradition.

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Deep breaths of socialism put a spring in Labour's step

SOMETIMES YOU can see a back bench deflate in front of your eyes. It happened to the Tories yesterday when MPs gathered to hear Michael Meacher read a statement about the Government's plans to give people greater access to the countryside. The advance word had been that New Labour was retreating from the idea of compulsion, but it soon turned out that this had been canny backspin. Squaring up to excoriate the Government for not keeping a manifesto promise, the Tories discovered, to their obvious dismay, that they were going to have to excoriate them for keeping it. As Mr Meacher said the magic words

"bring forward legislation", Labour members huzzahed and chortled at the glum faces of their opponents, loudly enough, indeed, to mask the crucial words "as soon as parliamentary time allows" - a phrase that could mean anything from next month to sometime in 2015.

But Labour backbenchers were too exhilarated to notice, taking in deep lungfuls of the tracing socialist air that blew around Mr Meacher's remarks. When a Labour minister talks about ensuring that "the people will be free in perpetuity" and alludes to landmark legislation from the Attlee government, you can tell that he is half thinking about

what he will look like embroidered on to a trade union banner, leading a march of cagouled rambblers into a glorious sunset. And even the most suspicious backbenchers were in a mood of giggly jubilation. "I feel kind of warm towards New Labour at the moment," said Gordon Prentice, before offering his private member's Bill to the minister as an early opportunity to press the legislation through. Barry Jones, carried away by the revivalist spirit of the occasion, asked the minister to assure him that legislation would also apply to Wales so that it would clear away "any remnants of 18th-century oligarchy". It wasn't

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

clear why it should be the 18th century, except that it sounded so impeccably wicked - a time when shotguns and gintraps would soon

put paid to unwanted intruders. Labour members saw a vision of sturdy rambblers, eyes bright with the beauty of nature as they planted a boot into the face of privilege. Their opponents saw an advancing army of oiks in shellsuits, annoying sheep and distressing innocent ground-nesting birds which would, if nature was allowed to take its course, be blasted from the sky six months later, as God had always intended. Where Labour talked of "rambling" and "roaming", placid and contemplative activities, the Plaid Cymru MP Eifryn Llwyd referred contemptuously to people "traipsing" around the countryside.

a verb that conjured a picture of a surly, foot-dragging excursion - pathway erosion personified. Conservative members would probably have gone even further, had they not been nervous about their appearance. To listen to them, talk, Mr Meacher had just announced his intention to pass a Right to Loller With Intent Act.

Conservative members asked two pertinent questions: Edward Garnier pointed out that both the European Convention and Labour's Human Rights Bill required compensation for any dilution of rights of property, and Peter Atkinson asking how the public would be in-

formed of the temporary closures that landowners would be allowed under the legislation - would the newly accessible countryside be invisible behind a rash of signs? Others may occur later. If, as Mr Meacher said, gardens were to be exempt from the regulations, you can imagine there might be a bit of a rush on down at the local garden centre - "I'd like to order 83 miles of herbaceous border, please, and four gross of assorted garden gnomes". But for the majority of MPs this wasn't a day to cavil at details. It was one to admire the splendid view - including that sparkling stretch of clear blue water.

Ramblers to get access 'in perpetuity'

A STATUTORY right to roam is the only way to ensure that four million acres of countryside are opened up to the public "in perpetuity", Michael Meacher, the Environment minister, declared yesterday.

In a Commons statement, Mr Meacher said the Government would bring forward legislation on the issue as soon as Parliamentary time allowed, and he expected that before the next general election.

To the cheers of Labour MPs, he said he was committed to meeting his party's manifesto pledge on a freedom to roam for walkers and rambblers across mountain, moor and heathland in England and Wales.

But the opposition accused the Government of "class warfare" and warned that the measures would be overly bureaucratic and could ruin the environment.

Mr Meacher said the statutory right would be balanced by "proper and reasonable limitations" and would not apply to developed or agricultural land.

A law was needed because

THE RIGHT TO ROAM

BY PAUL WAUGH

Political Correspondent

the voluntary approach to opening up the countryside had delivered "relatively little" over the last 50 years.

"Glorious parts of our heritage are still the preserve of the few, not the delight of the many," he told MPs.

"Only a new statutory right will deliver cost-effectively the extent and permanence of access we are seeking."

"We are now convinced that legislation is the only way to make sure people will be free in perpetuity to explore open countryside."

Mr Meacher said there was no question of giving people a "right to trample over crops or through other people's gardens", and Local Area Forums would address concerns and issues over "fragile" countryside areas.

Gillian Shephard, the shadow environment secretary, said voluntary agreements between landowners and rambblers were

a much better way of gaining increased access. Mrs Shephard, amid barracking by Labour MPs, said: "We deplore that you have sought to alienate the very people who have done so much to promote access in all parts of the country."

"It is regrettable, although perhaps only to be expected from someone who has talked about land-owning as 'exclusivity' and 'inherited privilege', that you should squander the goodwill which those in the countryside have sought to bring to this issue."

Mrs Shephard demanded compensation for landowners and farmers for costs of access and loss of land value.

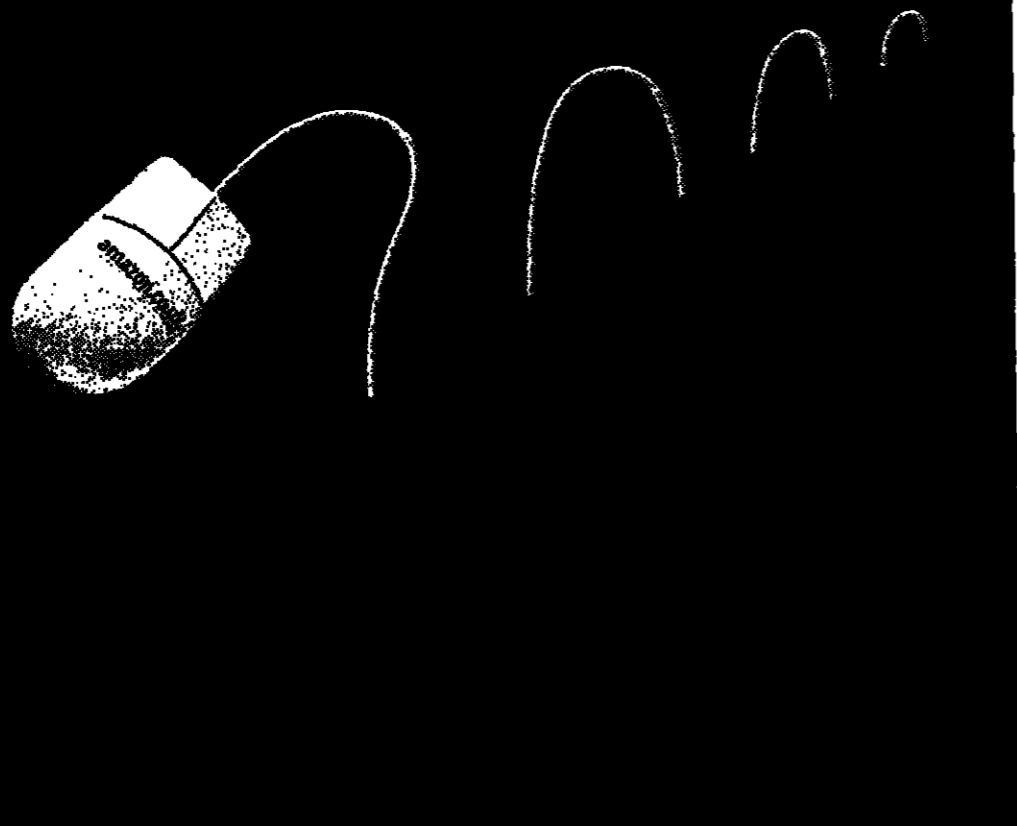
She added: "You have produced a solution which has the potential of satisfying no one. It will be cumbersome, it will be bureaucratic and it will further divide town and country. It is a squandered opportunity."

Matthew Taylor, for the Liberal Democrats, said the minister's statement was "a big step from national rights to legal realities".



Tony Banks, the Sports minister, launching the 'Show Racism the Red Card' video at Leicester City Football Club yesterday. 'Racism has no place in football,' he said, adding that Parliament was considering legislation making it an offence to chant racist abuse. *Kieran Ridley*

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Inquiry into why women are paid less than men

AN INVESTIGATION to establish why women's pay falls behind men's was promised by the Government yesterday. Tessa Jowell, minister for women, said that by the time women reached their mid-50s they only earned 65p for every pound men earned.

She hailed the Government's strategy to improve the lot of women as a "programme of listening, a programme of action, a programme of delivery. It is not just what government can do for women, but what women working with government and in their communities can achieve for themselves and their families."

But, during a debate to mark the 73rd International Women's Day, the Government's handling of women's issues was

FEMALE RIGHTS

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

Political Reporter

criticised by Harriet Harman, former social security secretary, who accused ministers of "macho rhetoric". After Peter Mandelson's resignation there had been talk of getting in "big hitters, big beasts and big guns" to deliver its message, Ms Harman said. "You can either adopt macho rhetoric or talk like women do - you can't do both. This government is for women; they should not be afraid to say so."

Calling for more female cabinet ministers, Ms Harman said: "The Government should avoid making policy on their own; they should make it with women." Female ministers

should be given a higher profile to promote key measures such as the right to take leave when their child was ill, due to be introduced under the Employment Relations Bill. "We have not heard a whisper about this new right ... it has been squeezed out by debate about trade-union recognition."

Theresa May, the Tory women's spokesman, accused ministers of putting rhetoric over substance, saying that since Labour came into power the pay differential between men and women had gone up.

The new Working Families Tax Credit would bring more families into the welfare net, she said, while entitlement to widow's benefit had been cut, with up to 250,000 women likely to miss out.

"This Government has not listened to women," she said. "Its priorities are more about its own priorities than women's priorities." Her concern was echoed by Jackie Ballard, for the Liberal Democrats, who said benefit cuts under the plans for welfare reform would hit women harder than men. "The impact of legislation should be carefully examined to ensure gender equality."

But Ms Jowell pointed to a series of measures such as the increase in childcare benefits, the National Carers' Strategy and the introduction of the National Minimum Wage, which had already helped women.

Mr Brown is expected today to unveil a "Budget for families" that hands more state help to poor families.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Weekend polls

THE GOVERNMENT is considering holding council elections at the weekend in response to concern over low turnout in local polls, George Howarth, a Home Office minister, said.

Buy-back aid

LOCAL AUTHORITIES will be reimbursed 35 per cent of the costs when buying back council homes to help buyers in financial difficulties, it was announced by the Housing Minister, Hilary Armstrong.

Widows' might

THE GOVERNMENT will consider compensation claims from people who were misadvised by the Social Security Department about widows' pensions, a Social Security minister, Stephen Timms, said.

Tories decry 'failed' New Deal scheme

THE GOVERNMENT'S New Deal programme was attacked by the Tories after it emerged that only 3.8 per cent of lone parents invited to enter the scheme got jobs after doing so.

After the publication of January's figures, which showed the success rate had dropped from 7 per cent, Iain Duncan Smith, the Tory social security spokesman, accused ministers of wasting £200m on the initiative. Since the programme was set up, 183,583 letters have been sent to lone parents inviting them to an interview but only 6,262 got jobs as a result.

Under the Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill, now going through Parliament, lone parents will have to attend interviews with benefits staff or have their benefits cut.

During question time Mr Duncan Smith added that a fifth of lone parents who did get jobs left them after six months.

SOCIAL SECURITY

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

Political Reporter

"The whole New Deal for lone parents has proved nothing more than an expensive failure. This is because ministers did not listen or study the project properly," he said.

The figures were published as the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, was expected to expand the programme to over-50s in his Budget today.

A big extension of the New Deal, seen as a vital plank of the welfare-to-work initiative, with the creation of 60,000 places for long-term unemployed, was announced in the November pre-budget statement.

Earlier this month it was disclosed that 43 per cent of the young unemployed who enter the education and training option of the New Deal find jobs, down from 47 per cent.

THE HOUSE



GM animals

Some 350,000 genetically modified animals were produced and bred in the UK for scientific experiments, the Home Office minister Lord Williams of Mostyn said.

Today's agenda

Commons: 2.30pm: Questions on Environment, the Regions and Transport; Budget speech by Gordon Brown; Budget debate opened by William Hague; Debate on long-term care funding. Lords: 2.30pm: Trustee Delegation Bill; Commonwealth Development Corporation Bill; Debate on European report on airline competition; Births and Deaths Registration Bill; Obscenity Bill; Rent Acts Order.

CLARE HAS MARSHALL BUT THINKS SHE WANTS HENRY
MARSHALL HAS CLARE AND ALSO HAS LAURA
HENRY'S HAD HEATHER AND ALMOST HAD CLARE
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George VI: Concerned

FEARS OF political unrest and instability in post-war Britain have been revealed in letters between King George VI and Clement Attlee, the prime minister. As royal correspondence, the letters were not due to be opened for 100 years but under the new policy of accelerated release they have been opened early by the Public Record Office in Kew.

In a letter dated 1 September 1951 the king writes from Balmoral Castle of his concern about a planned Common-

wealth tour. "As I said at one of our talks in the summer (and you agreed with me), it would be very difficult indeed for me to go away for five or six months unless it was reasonably certain political stability would prevail during my absence."

It is signed "I am, Yours very sincerely, George R."

In mid-1951 Attlee faced mounting industrial unrest. Engineers, railwaymen, miners, agricultural workers and

builders were among those demanding higher pay. The King was also concerned about the actions of Mohammed Musadeq, prime minister of Iran, which had nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

And there had been tension between Britain and Egypt over the Suez Canal. The king was worried about sailing through it. "Our unhappy relations with Egypt may, if they persist, oblige me to adopt an alternative."

In the event, Labour's trou-

bles were such that an election was called on 19 September and Churchill and the Conservatives were elected in October.

King George was already ill and tells Attlee: "There are plenty of worries at present to prevent one enjoying anything. I am better for my time up here, though the weather is cold."

In a letter dated 6 September, he writes: "I am going to London, for the doctors want me to take more X-ray photographs that they cannot take elsewhere."

King George never made the tour: his health declined and he died on 6 February 1952.

Another file released yesterday, dated 1963, shows that the Duke of Edinburgh had already started his habit of annoying people with off-the-cuff remarks, having claimed that exporters were being put off by the inordinate amount of paperwork involved.

In internal prime minister's correspondence, Harold Macmillan showed that he was irritated about Prince Philip's

"inaccurate remarks", which he had made at a luncheon over what he described as a tangle of controls concerning export trade.

Macmillan had a briefing sent to Prince Philip with the accurate facts and figures regarding export controls, showing that 80 per cent of exports required only one form to be completed, and that the prime minister was anxious to demonstrate that exporters were not being put off by excessive paperwork.



Attlee: Faced unrest

Mowlam show is hit with nurses

MO MOWLAM paid tribute yesterday to the staff who nursed her when she was diagnosed as having a benign brain tumour in January 1996. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had months of gruelling radiotherapy treatment before being given the all-clear in 1997.

Ms Mowlam told delegates at the Royal College of Nursing's annual conference in Harrogate, North Yorkshire: "It is not just about statistics. It is about the relationship you have with patients. For patients, that is what it is all about."

"I know this from a personal experience when I had treatment two years ago. The relationship made a big difference to my confidence about getting through it. I know from when I have visited hospitals that what patients are desperate to get across is to say what good work the nurses do."

Ms Mowlam's speech was a triumph for the Downing Street artists of spin. She was possibly the only cabinet minister

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

who could have extracted cheers from a disgruntled RCN, burdened with staff shortages on the wards, increasing pressures of work and a divisive pay award.

The Secretary of State for Health, Frank Dobson, stayed away from the conference yesterday - fearing, perhaps, a repeat of the boing that greeted his appearance last year. In his place, Ms Mowlam, who had flown in from the Irish Republic where she had been attending a treaty-signing ceremony at Dublin Castle, delivered a witty, confident performance that paid warm tribute to the efforts of nurses and was equally warmly received.

She offered a "special thank you" to the nurses in Northern Ireland whose commitment and contribution she had seen at first hand. "They've had some horrific jobs to face. They can be faced with an atrocity in



Ms Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, praising nurses at their annual conference in Harrogate yesterday

John Furlong

an inhuman and barbaric form and they will never know when the next one is coming. It adds a degree of stress and tension to the job," she said.

Nurses had played a "phenomenally important" part in helping the people of Omagh recover after the bombing that killed 29 last August, as they had

done for the families of the 3,000 killed and 40,000 injured in the troubles over the past 30 years. "If you have tried to match fingers, hands and bits of body together, that trauma doesn't go away," Ms Mowlam said.

For some people the peace process, while outwardly welcomed, resurrected old traumas that needed new responses. "When families became aware the violence was ending, the problems they had coped with came to the fore again," she said.

Ms Mowlam's speech, peppered with self-deprecating asides - including an account of how she had introduced her personal bodyguards to "multi-

skilling" by sending them out to do the household shopping - was, however, thin on new policy.

She announced an extension of the scheme to allow nurses to prescribe a limited range of drugs, an end to short-term contracts and new measures to introduce family-friendly working conditions.

Speaking at a press conference later, Christine Hancock, general secretary of the RCN, said that she had sent the invitation to address the congress to Ms Mowlam, an old friend, last autumn.

"She brought the phenomenal experience of having been

a patient and having political responsibility for a part of the UK where nurses had to do more and go further. She did nurses the honour of coming to the congress at an incredibly difficult time, paid tribute to them and made clear they are crucial to the Government's plans for the NHS," Ms Hancock said.

However, she said that there were also problems in the National Health Service. "Not all is going well. There are shortages, pressures of work, and people are feeling demoralised. Local trusts vary enormously - some give positive messages but in others people feel very undervalued."

Sarwar cleared of poll fraud

BY NICK MEO

THE LABOUR MP Mohammed Sarwar was acquitted yesterday of a charge of fraud relating to the addition of names to the electoral register.

He denies three remaining charges, two allegations of attempting to pervert the course of justice and one of understating election expenses.

At the High Court in Edinburgh, Lady Cosgrove acquitted him after a withdrawal of the charge by Advocate Depute Duncan Menzies.

The move came as the Crown case was closed on the 28th day of the trial.

The MP's co-accused, Mumtaz Hussain, 41, from Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, denies one charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Mr Sarwar, 46, of Pollokshields, Glasgow, became Britain's first Muslim MP when he was elected for Glasgow Govan in May 1997.

Weeks afterwards the *News of the World* claimed he had paid an election rival a £5,000 cash "bribe".

The charge Mr Sarwar was cleared of had accused him of responsibility for adding to the electoral register the names of people who were not qualified to vote in the constituency. The Crown alleged that several Asian individuals had used late application forms to register, at Mr Sarwar's bidding.

It also emerged that he had been forced to give a police interview on the day he had planned to make his first speech in Parliament on December 5 1997.

An investigating officer admitted that fact during questioning and added that police had been unhappy with 36 applications from late voters. The trial was adjourned until tomorrow.

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PC 'lay in wait to kill woman'

BY BRIAN FARMER

A POLICEMAN lay in wait for his former girlfriend, squirted CS spray in her face then stabbed her to death, a court was told yesterday.

Owen Palmer, 55, a police constable from Norwich, had been "harassing" Christine Johnson, 36, for 15 months before killing her last August, Norwich Crown Court was told. Less than a year before the attack, Mr Palmer had been warned by Ms Johnson's solicitor that he could face legal action for "stalking" her.

Charles Wide QC, for the prosecution, said Mr Palmer had been unable to accept that his relationship with Ms Johnson, a care assistant, was over. He had waited outside her home in Norwich, armed with a knife and CS spray.

Neighbours and Ms Johnson's parents heard screams and found her dead in the garden. She had suffered "awful wounds" to her neck. Mr Palmer was seen leaving the scene smiling. He went to the police station where he worked and told a senior officer he had murdered his girlfriend.

Mr Wide said the issue was not whether Mr Palmer had killed Ms Johnson, but whether he had been suffering from a depressive illness, which meant his responsibility for her death was impaired. He denies murder and the trial continues.

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£1,380.16, £1,404.36, £1,428.76, £1,453.36, £1,478.16, £1,503.16, £1,528.36, £1,553.76, £1,579.36, £1,605.16, £1,631.16, £1,657.36, £1,683.76, £1,710.36, £1,737.16, £1,764.16, £1,791.36, £1,818.76, £1,846.36, £1,874.16, £1,902.16, £1,930.36, £1,958.76, £1,987.36, £2,016.16, £2,045.16, £2,074.36, £2,103.76, £2,133.36, £2,163.16, £2,193.16, £2,223.36, £2,253.76, £2,284.36, £2,315.16, £2,346.16, £2,377.36, £2,408.76, £2,440.36, £2,472.16, £2,504.16, £2,536.36, £2,568.76, £2,601.36, £2,634.16, £2,667.16, £2,700.36, £2,733.76, £2,767.36, £2,801.16, £2,835.16, £2,869.36, £2,903.76, £2,938.36, £2,973.16, £3,008.16, £3,043.36, £3,078.76, £3,114.36, £3,150.16, £3,186.16, £3,222.36, £3,258.76, £3,295.36, £3,332.16, £3,369.16, £3,406.36, £3,443.76, £3,481.36, £3,519.16, £3,557.16, £3,595.36, £3,633.76, £3,672.36, £3,711.16, £3,750.16, £3,789.36, £3,828.76, £3,868.36, £3,908.16, £3,948.16, £3,988.36, £4,028.76, £4,069.36, £4,110.16, £4,151.16, £4,192.36, £4,233.76, £4,275.36, £4,317.16, £4,359.16, £4,401.36, £4,443.76, £4,486.36, £4,529.16, £4,572.16, £4,615.36, £4,658.76, £4,702.36, £4,746.16, £4,790.16, £4,834.36, £4,878.76, £4,923.36, £4,968.16, £5,013.16, £5,058.36, £5,103.76, £5,149.36, £5,195.16, £5,241.16, £5,287.36, £5,333.76, £5,380.36, £5,427.16, £5,474.16, £5,521.36, £5,568.76, £5,616.36, £5,664.16, £5,712.16, £5,760.36, £5,808.76, £5,857.36, £5,906.16, £5,955.16, £6,004.36, £6,053.76, £6,103.36, £6,153.16, £6,203.16, £6,253.36, £6,303.76, £6,354.36, £6,405.16, £6,456.16, £6,507.36, £6,558.76, £6,610.36, £6,662.16, £6,714.16, £6,766.36, £6,818.76, £6,871.36, £6,924.16, £6,977.16, £7,030.36, £7,083.76, £7,137.36, £7,191.16, £7,245.16, £7,299.36, £7,353.76, £7,408.36, £7,462.96, £7,517.76, £7,572.76, £7,627.96, £7,683.36, £7,738.96, £7,794.76, £7,850.76, £7,906.96, £7,963.36, £8,019.96, £8,076.76, £8,133.76, £8,190.96, £8,248.36, £8,305.96, £8,363.76, £8,421.76, £8,480.16, £8,538.76, £8,597.56, £8,656.56, £8,715.76, £8,775.16, £8,834.76, £8,894.56, £8,954.56, £9,014.76, 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£30,382.76, £30,492.96, £30,603.36, £30,713.96, £30,824.76, £30,935.76, £31,046.96, £31,158.36, £31,269.96, £31,381.76, £31,493.76, £31,605.96, £31,718.36, £31,830.96, £31,943.76, £32,056.76, £32,169.96, £32,283.36, £32,396.96, £32,510.76, £32,624.76, £32,738.96, £32,853.36, £32,967.96, £33,082.76, £33,197.76, £33,312.96, £33,428.36, £33,543.96, £33,659.76, £33,775.76, £33,891.96, £34,008.36, £34,124.96, £34,241.76, £34,358.76, £34,475.96, £34,593.36, £34,710.96, £34,828.76, £34,946.76, £35,064.96, £35,183.36, £35,301.96, £35,420.76, £35,539.76, £35,658.96, £35,778.36, £35,897.96, £36,017.76, £36,137.96, £36,258.36, £36,378.96, £36,499.76, £36,620.76, £36,741.96, £36,863.36, £36,984.96, £37,106.76, £37,228.76, £37,350.96, £37,473.36, £37,595.96, £37,718.76, £37,841.76, £37,964.96, £38,088.36, £38,211.96, £38,335.76, £38,459.76, £38,583.96, £38,708.36, £38,832.96, £38,957.76, £39,082.76, £39,207.96, £39,333.36, £39,458.96, £39,584.76, £39,710.76, £39,836.96, £39,963.36, £40,089.96, 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New York weeps for its finest son

NEW YORK bowed its head in mourning yesterday for a man who in life was closer to the city's soul than almost any figure you can think of and who will always remain one of its most powerful and beloved legends. Joe DiMaggio, arguably the world's first sporting superstar, had passed away in Florida.

DiMaggio, who earned the name "Joltin' Joe" after securing his still unbroken 56-game hitting record - the Streak - in the summer of 1941, died in the early hours of yesterday morning in a South Florida hospital after fighting a months-long battle with lung cancer. He was 84.

While there were expressions of grief from across America, nowhere was the loss more deeply felt than in New York, home to DiMaggio's team, the Yankees. Radio and

By DAVID USBORNE
in New York

television station's yesterday aired tributes and played the Simon and Garfunkel song "Mrs Robinson", which laments "Joltin' Joe has left and gone away".

Only last week, the owner of the Yankees, George Steinbrenner, visited DiMaggio in Florida and invited him to perform the ritual of throwing out the first ball in the season's opening game in Yankee Stadium on 9 April. He was too weak then to respond. "He just smiled," Mr Steinbrenner reported yesterday.

DiMaggio was declared close to death several times over recent months since he had surgery in October last year. To its intense embarrassment, the NBC news network four weeks ago

accidentally aired a bulletin saying he had passed away which it then immediately retracted.

In spite of DiMaggio's fame, which deepened when he wed Marilyn Monroe in 1954 - a marriage that quickly soured and left him heartbroken - he remained always a shy and very private man.

"He felt uncomfortable with a lot of people, but yet he was always there as a tremendous representative of our game of baseball," said Tommy Lasorda, former manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Common to all the tributes paid to DiMaggio yesterday was the notion of a star whose standing as a popular icon had long ago transcended the sport of baseball itself. He may be remembered in part as the first of a category of superstars whose members include

Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali.

"Even though I was never one who cared about baseball, I care a lot about Joe DiMaggio," conceded Ed Koch, the former mayor of New York. "He represented the best in America. It was his character, his generosity, his sensitivity. He was someone who set a standard every father would want his children to follow."

The Paul Simon song, "Mrs Robinson", was composed for the film *The Graduate*. Meant to evoke a simpler and prouder time in American history when DiMaggio ruled on the diamond, it will be on the New York airwaves for days to come. "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you. What's that you say, Mrs Robinson? Joltin' Joe has left and gone away."

Obituary, Review, page 7



Joe DiMaggio tossing out the first pitch at Yankee Stadium last April. The baseball star died yesterday Reuters

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Women make history in Qatar election

THEY WERE separated from the men by wooden screens, but the women of Qatar still made history yesterday when they voted for the first time in a nationwide poll. There were even six women among the 248 candidates competing in the country's first democratic elections since independence from Britain in 1971.

Qataris were voting for representatives on a new 29-member central municipal council that is to give advice on food and public hygiene to the ministry of municipal affairs and agriculture. This may seem a modest democratic advance, but the elections are seen as a watershed. A national elected parliament is planned and yesterday's polls are a first step towards the legislature that is expected to be set up early in the next century.

Female voters turned up in greater numbers than men at many constituencies in the capital, Doha. "Our women are more educated than men, you know, and they are more eager to see the change," said one female candidate. The otherwise positive credentials of the elections were undermined, however, by the fact that only a small proportion of the whole population voted.

By JAMES ROBERTS

All Qatari citizens over 18 years of age, out of a native population of 150,000, were eligible, but according to officials only 23,000 registered in time. Police and defence personnel were barred from voting. Between 90 and 95 per cent of those eligible had cast their ballots in Doha by the end of polling and in rural areas turnout as polls closed was estimated at 60 to 70 per cent.

Qatar is a political maverick in a conservative region. The emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, has said that people's participation in the affairs of state can accelerate economic and social development. "March 8 will enter Qatar's modern history as the blessed start of an era of democracy and popular participation in the service of the homeland and its citizens," said the Prime Minister, Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani.

The role of women as voters and candidates is a first for the Gulf region. Kuwait, the only Gulf state that has an elected parliament, does not allow women to vote or run for office. Oman's consultative council has two female members, but the body is indirectly elected.

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هاتوا من الأصل

Where women tune in to Russia's 'Oprah'

FOR THE typical Russian husband, who pays attention to his wife once a year, there was an alternative this International Women's Day to rolling home drunk and thrusting into her hands a bunch of wilting mimosa. He could roll home drunk and give her a copy of the new bestseller *Women's Stories*. The only snag was, she had probably been out already and bought the book herself.

Women's Stories is based on a confessional television series of the same name. It is hopelessly to make a social engagement for a Tuesday evening, as all the bars are empty, the streets are deserted and the blue light of television screens flickers from every home. Russians are glued to a show hosted by the peroxide blonde Oksana Pushkina, the closest they have yet to Oprah Winfrey.

Russia where, until recently, Raisa Gorbacheva was the bravest woman here, because she dared to appear in public with her husband, Mikhail, and show that she had something of a personality herself.

The heroines of *Women's Stories* are mostly unknown in the West, although two names mean something outside Russia. Naniuli Shevardnadze, wife of the Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, enlivens a dull account of being a political spouse with a description of how her husband howled in an ice-cold Jacuzzi for 10 days when trying to stop smoking.

Lyudmila Rutsikaya, wife of the Afghan war hero and Russian politician Alexander Rutsik, gives a much franker interview about how, on the eve of their 25th wedding anniversary, the man for whom she had sacrificed her own career ran off with a younger woman.

"I did not attach much significance to it at first," Mrs Rutsikaya says. "I thought, 'He's grey-haired, it's just the male menopause.' But when the articles started appearing

STREET LIFE
SAMOTECHNY LANE

International Women's Day in Moscow yesterday AP

in the papers, I realised he had gone completely off his head. At his age, biology takes it toll. He flew to Argentina with her. He came back, I looked at him and noticed he was wearing cosmetics - women's face

cream. I said to him, 'Sasha, how long have you been using women's face cream?'

Pushkina, who learnt her interview techniques while working at American television stations, says courage and de-

termination are the qualities her subjects have in common. She answers critics, who accuse her of banality and muck-raking, by claiming to give comfort: ordinary Russians recognise their own problems in the struggles of the stars and know that they are not alone.

If Russian women had hard lives in Soviet times, when the Communists paid lip service to equality while sending them out to work in road gangs, then their lot has scarcely improved. The Russian woman still faces a low glass ceiling at work and does everything at home for the man who might, if she is lucky, wash the dishes on Women's Day.

The celebrities in Pushkina's series probably had servants or dishwashers but their hearts were still broken by unfaithful men, who left them to bring up the children alone. Larisa Latynina, the woman who trained Soviet gymnasts including Olga Korbut, describes how her husband would go off on "business trips", returning a few days later with large sums of money.

Only after he was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison did she learn that he was a swindler. His downfall ruined her career too, for the Soviet authorities said she could not be trusted to travel abroad and denied her an exit visa.

Hardship, however, has made Russian women strong and Pushkina believes the time is right for feminism in this most sexist of countries. It should not reject men, she says, because they are victims of the system too. Rather, it should be a hearty *bolshevik* (*bolshoi* 'big') movement of capable and talented women, ready to help each other and do good in society.

Pushkina believes there is no reason why a woman should not one day sit in the Kremlin. The interview that gave her most satisfaction was with the democrat Galina Starovoitova, shortly before she was assassinated. "She was a *kassnaya tyotya* (a cool auntie), the nearest we have had yet to a woman leader in Russia."

HELEN WOMACK

KLA deal
blow to
peace in
KosovoBY ENIMA DALY
in Belgrade

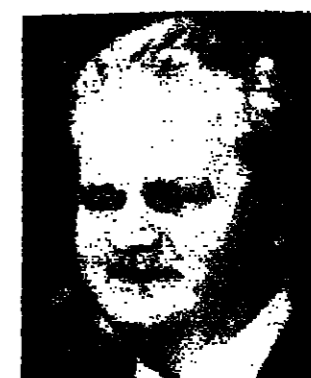
THE KOSOVO Liberation Army appeared to dash hopes of an early end to the war in the Serb province yesterday when leaders at a secret meeting were believed to have rejected the Western-backed peace plan.

Western diplomats urged the KLA to agree to the deal and put additional pressure on the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, to consent.

Germany's Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, said the rebels would be making a "historical mistake" if they rejected the plan. The European Union's foreign affairs commissioner, Hans van den Broek, was more blunt: "We need a 'yes' or it will be a big mess."

The main sticking point for the KLA was the requirement that the guerrillas hand over their weapons and accept autonomy from Belgrade rather than independence. The separatist movement is also opposed to Russia's proposed participation in an international peace-keeping force for the province, because Russia is Serbia's close ally.

Suleyman Selimi, the KLA chief of staff, warned earlier that the rebels would not accept a compromise. "Halfway measures to independence are unacceptable unless they lead to full independence," he said, making a rare public appearance with other KLA leaders. They were attending a ceremony to mark the first anniversary of the killing of Adem



Milosevic Pressure on him to agree the peace deal

Jashari, a KLA founder and well-known nationalist leader. He died with 50 relatives in a three-day battle with Serbian forces.

The gathering of at least 500 armed and uniformed KLA fighters alongside 5,000 enthusiastic civilians was only a ruse from a Serbian military base in the province.

At recent Kosovo peace talks in Rambouillet, France, the KLA said it could not sign a deal before consulting soldiers and local people. Yesterday, fighting continued on Kosovo's southern border with Yugoslav forces bombarding villages near the town of Kacanik. The army prevented international observers from reaching the villages. The ethnic Albanian-run Kosovo Information Centre said Serb forces also attacked villages in the northern Podujevo area for a second straight day, burning at least eight Albanian houses.

Haider poll victory
shakes Austria

THE VICTORY by Austria's far-right Freedom Party may force Chancellor Viktor Klima's coalition to soften support for European Union expansion, observers said yesterday.

The nationalist party of Jörg Haider, who has been branded a crypto-Nazi, on Sunday scored its biggest electoral success by winning 42 per cent of the vote in Carinthia. Mr Haider had been forced to resign as governor of the province

in 1991 after praising Hitler's employment policies.

Mr Haider's victory means the two main political parties can no longer shun him. The European Parliament election is in June and a national election in October, and protest votes could further inflame the Freedom Party's support.

His re-election as governor needs support by two-thirds of Carinthia's parliamentary members.

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BUSINESS

Bid battle looms after £408m offer for Albright

BRIEFING

Fortis in \$2.6bn US takeover deal
FORTIS, the Benelux-based financial services group, has agreed an arch-rival Aegion Inc. to the United States, announcing a \$2.6bn takeover deal for American Bankers Insurance, a leading provider of credit insurance to financial services firms. The deal doubles Fortis' presence in that market, where Fortis is already a major player through its offshoot American Security Group. The firms will have a combined annual gross premium income of \$3.6bn. ABI is active in the UK, the Caribbean and Latin America as well as the US.

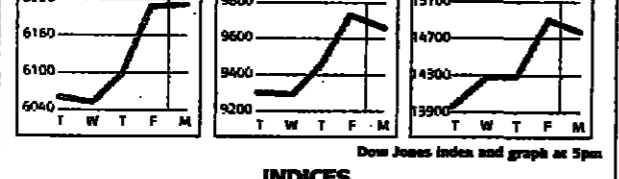
Senior Goldmans partner to quit

JON CORZINE (left), the senior partner at Goldman Sachs, is to leave the Wall Street firm once it is successfully floated in May. His departure has been seen as inevitable after Mr Corzine gave up his day-to-day management responsibilities in January after losing out to rival John Thornton in the power struggle that followed the collapse of earlier plans to float the business last autumn. At a meeting of the firm's 220 partners, which approved the revival of the flotation plans yesterday, Goldmans named David Viniar chief financial officer. Barry Zubrow will take on the newly-created role of chief administrative officer.

Axa warns on stakeholder pensions

AXA SUN LIFE, one of the UK's biggest life insurers, has warned of a law in legislation over stakeholder pensions which could lead customers to "mis-buy" the products en masse. The insurer said the Welfare Reform and Pensions Bill forces them to accept transfers of pension savings from occupational schemes into stakeholder pensions - even when they knew this would make a customer substantially worse off. Pension transfers were at the heart of the £11bn mis-selling scandal, which is still being cleared up by regulators.

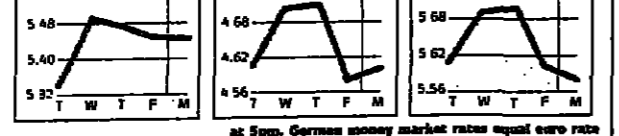
STOCK MARKETS



Indices

Index	Close	Change	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	6208.80	3.30	6319.80	4999.20	2.39
FTSE 250	3352.20	10.80	3370.90	2427.60	3.14
FTSE 350	2946.60	2.30	2978.70	2110.40	2.67
FTSE All Share	2848.79	2.75	2886.52	2143.58	2.71
FTSE SmallCap	2315.80	11.40	2379.80	1834.40	3.50
FTSE Fledgling	1261.60	2.50	1270.10	1046.20	4.38
FTSE AIM	839.70	6.70	846.90	761.80	1.12
FTSE Europe 100	2835.74	-22.72	2880.72	2018.15	2.11
FTSE Europe 300	1232.51	-8.77	1234.07	880.63	1.97
Dow Jones	9689.21	-45.38	9738.79	7400.30	1.60
Nikkei	14775.05	-114.95	14775.35	12787.90	0.26
Hong Kong	10263.99	22.87	10263.99	6544.79	3.41
Dax	4788.69	-50.40	4817.63	3833.71	1.81
S&P 500	1272.06	-2.96	1283.91	923.32	1.25
Shanghai	2367.87	30.75	2333.44	1357.09	0.29
Taiwan 300	6444.80	29.69	6444.80	5320.90	1.64
Brazil Bovespa	9238.78	61.58	9238.78	4575.69	6.50
Singapore S&P	3322.45	-32.72	3322.45	2696.28	2.14
Amsterdam AEX	525.52	-4.02	525.52	356.58	1.96
France CAC 40	4175.97	-13.99	4204.94	2881.21	1.87
Milan MBSE	35759.00	-608.00	36170.00	24175.00	1.14
Madrid IBS 35	9861.40	-143.60	10089.80	6869.90	1.77
Irish All Share	5418.09	29.03	5418.09	3732.57	1.52
S Korea Comp	571.84	33.65	571.84	277.37	0.26
Australia ASX	2929.60	27.10	2929.60	2396.70	3.14

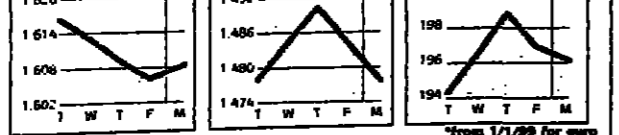
INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	5.48	-2.09	5.43	-2.13	4.60	-1.44	4.57	-1.43
US	5.00	-0.69	5.37	-0.45	5.30	0.94	5.58	0.37
Japan	0.17	-0.56	0.22	-0.47	1.71	-0.18	2.77	0.26
Germany	5.09	-0.42	3.10	-0.68	4.06	-0.94	5.04	-0.54

CURRENCIES



Pound

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6083	-0.02	1.6384
Euro	1.4274	-0.52	1.4079
Yen	196.02	-11.07	209.29
£ index	102.10	-0.30	105.40

Dollar

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
£ Sterling	0.6218	-0.01	0.6104
Euro	0.9183	-0.06	0.8573
Yen	121.91	-10.64	127.65
\$ index	108.00	-0.10	109.10

OTHER INDICATORS

Commodities

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	11.33	0.34	12.75
Gold (\$)	288.85	1.40	294.45
Silver (\$)	5.25	-0.05	6.31

GDP

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
GDP 115.40	3.00	112.04	Mar
RPI 163.40	2.40	159.57	Feb
Base Rates	5.50	7.25	

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4707
Austria (schillings)	19.68
Belgium (francs)	57.84
Canada (\$)	2.3706
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8261
Denmark (kroner)	10.71
Finland (markka)	8.5376
France (francs)	9.3944
Germany (marks)	2.8086
Greece (drachma)	461.92
Hong Kong (\$)	1.1260
Iceland (pounds)	61.24
India (rupees)	5.9777
Israel (shekels)	5.7786
Ireland (pounds)	191.51
Japan (yen)	191.51
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.8458
Malta (lira)	0.6136
Mexico (nuevo peso)	14.39
Netherlands (guilders)	3.1530
New Zealand (\$)	2.9061
Norway (kroner)	12.32
Portugal (escudos)	285.50
Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8447
Singapore (\$)	2.6208
South Africa (rand)	5.9547
Spain (pesetas)	237.57
Sweden (kronor)	12.87
Switzerland (francs)	2.2894
Thailand (bahts)	54.11
Turkey (liras)	554920
USA (\$)	1.5671

ALBEMARLE, the US high-specialty chemicals company, yesterday launched a \$408m cash bid for Albright & Wilson, its UK rival, in a move which could trigger a takeover battle for the troubled British group.

The Albemarle offer of 130p per share was recommended by A&W's board but met with a muted response from Phillips & Drew, the UK group's largest shareholder. P&D, which owns a stake of around 24 per cent, refused to immediately accept the offer and is believed to be waiting for other bidders to enter the fray.

However, other large shareholders, including Mercury Asset Management, were believed to have sold part of the holdings to Albemarle. The Virginia-based company, which has a market value of over \$1bn, said last night that it had acquired over 18 per cent of A&W on the market.

Insiders said that A&W, which produces chemicals for agriculture and detergents, has been approached by at least two other parties, tipped to be the French group Rhodia, part of the pharmaceutical giant Rhone-Poulenc, a UK financial buyer. US groups including FMC and Witco, two large chemical producers, could also be interested in A&W.

Industry experts said that potential bidders were likely to wait for A&W's results tomorrow before deciding whether to trump Albemarle's bid.

They added that, although the US group's offer was pitched at a 70 per cent premium to A&W's share price before the announcement of takeover talks, a bid war could increase the offer price to around 150p.

"The upside of waiting for a few days is possibly another 20p on the offer price," one investor said.

Shares in A&W have been battered by a cyclical downturn in chemical markets and were trading some 50 per cent below their 1995 flotation price before the start of bid speculation. They closed up 19.5p to 129.5p yesterday.

The Albemarle chief executive officer Floyd Gottwald defended the bid and said that a combination with A&W would boost his company's geographical spread, giving it an important foothold in Europe. He added that A&W's products were complementary to Albemarle's polymer and fine chemicals and he did not foresee large job cuts among A&W's 1,850 UK staff.

The combined group would have sales of around £1.3bn and a total staff of over 4500 people with operations in most major markets in the world.

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The combined group would have sales of around £1.3bn and a total staff of over 4500 people with operations in most major markets in the world.

Ombudsman's ruling flouted by Skipton

THE BUILDING SOCIETIES Ombudsman has upheld the stakes in his battle to force Skipton Building Society to pay compensation to homeowners after finding compelling evidence of mortgage mis-selling.

Brian Murphy, the ombudsman, has made a near-unprecedented use of his powers to force Skipton into a public reprimand, demanding it publish details of his findings in national newspapers.

The use of the power - not employed since the late 1980s - followed Skipton's rejection of a decision he made ordering the society to pay compensation to the people he said were unfairly treated.

Mr Murphy yesterday sent a letter to all chief executives of building societies, later passed by industry sources to *The Independent*, saying that Skipton had decided to reject the ruling, endorsing the publicity "as an alternative to complying with my decisions".

The ruling found that Skipton had marketed a commercial mortgage to an unnamed firm of financial advisers with a rate of "1 per cent over base rates". The actual rate later varied between 1 and 4 per cent over base rates.

Mr Murphy ordered the society to repay the difference between 1 per cent over base rates and the actual rate, fix it at that rate in future, and pay £500 in compensation to each customer affected.

The letter to chief executives underlines Mr Murphy's anger at the ability of mortgage lenders to bypass the formal complaints scheme. While Skipton later settled with its customers, they were left with no bargaining power because his ruling no longer counted.

"I had reached the decision after a very full investigation... I took the view there was compelling evidence the society had mis-sold a mortgage to the complainants and that the society had treated them unfairly."

The ombudsman's action adds fuel to an ongoing debate over whether mortgages should be regulated on a statutory footing. Under current rules, mortgage providers can reject what the ombudsman says - even when he concludes that mis-selling has taken place and orders compensation to be paid.

Instead, they can simply reject the ombudsman's rulings and opt for the "publicity option" requiring them to take out national newspaper advertisements. Customers then have no way to ensure their complaint is satisfied except to go to court.

John Dawson, secretary and general manager of the Skipton, said: "We are disappointed in that we didn't know this letter was being circulated. We have resolved the matter with our customers and they are still customers."

In Skipton's view, the "1 per cent above base" was not meant to indicate a rate for the lifetime of the mortgage. The society says it was not contractually bound to stick to the rate and the customers were not misled.

The Government has warned mortgage lenders they will be regulated by legal statute unless they can show they are capable of regulating themselves.



Office of the Building Societies Ombudsman
Ombudsman - Brian Murphy

Strictly Private & Confidential
8 March 1999

I had reached the decision in question after a very full investigation of the facts, including an oral hearing when I heard evidence from the relevant witnesses. I took the view that there was compelling evidence that the Society had mis-sold a mortgage to the complainants and I concluded that the Society had treated the complainants unfairly and/or had been guilty of maladministration.

FTC and Intel settle antitrust action

BY MARY DEJEVSKY in Washington

THE US Federal Trade Commission reached a preliminary settlement yesterday with the computer giant, Intel, ending off a test of US antitrust legislation that had been set to rival the case against Microsoft.

The settlement came a day before the FTC was to start the formal hearing of complaints that Intel had used its near-monopoly position in the computer chip market to the detriment of would-be competitors.

No details were given, but both sides expressed satisfaction with the terms. The FTC filed a motion to withdraw the antitrust case and a formal decision, endorsed by the four-member commission, is expected by week-end.

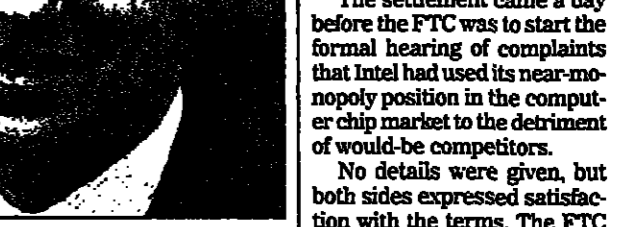
The FTC charged that Intel had "coerced major established customers into granting access to their technology on terms favourable to Intel" and withheld details of its own technology that would have enabled them to compete. The action was a response to complaints by three companies - Intelgraph, Compaq and Digital Equipment Corp - that Intel was soliciting confidential information with the aim of using it to improve its own products.

The principle of the case was similar to Microsoft's, which resumes in the Washington court next month, but there were key differences. The Microsoft case was brought by the Justice Department and is going through the judicial system, while that against Intel was brought by FTC and was to be heard by an FTC judge, leaving open the possibility of an appeal in open court.

The response of the two companies - which between them command more than 80 per cent of the world's computer market - was also different. Intel acknowledged the practices complained of, but defended them as part and parcel of free competition. Microsoft executives have denied the restrictive practices of which it has been accused, but found themselves frequently wrong-footed in the courtroom by their own e-mails and internal office communications.

The settlement, assuming it is approved by the FTC, was deemed to suit both parties. The FTC, according to lawyers in Washington, had no certainty of winning. Intel could see the legal complications and ill-feeling generated by the Microsoft case and feared a protracted case that could affect its already declining market share.

Intel said yesterday: "Intel is pleased with the agreement and we believe it provides adequate value for our intellectual property," but declined to comment further.



John Goodfellow, Skipton CEO (top left), and Brian Murphy, ombudsman (top right). Below: The letter sent yesterday by Mr Murphy to all building society chief executives

Inchcape set to return £500m to investors

BY MICHAEL HARRISON Business Editor

WORTH £550m. Philip Cushing, the chief executive, said he was confident that the remaining two unwanted businesses - its Middle East marketing interests and office automation - would be disposed of by the end of June. Analysts expect the two businesses to fetch around £100m.

The overhaul of Inchcape will leave it with just a car import and distribution arm handling six main marques - Toyota, Mazda, Jaguar, Peugeot and Subaru - and an Asian motors business based in Hong Kong.

Mr Cushing said that Inchcape expected to unveil new deals with car makers in coming months. It is also considering expanding into other areas such as body repair and used car supermarkets.

Despite the promised payout to shareholders the Inchcape chairman, Lord Marshall, warned that sales were forecast to decline in most of the group's most important markets during this year. The shares fell 9p, or 5 per cent, to close at 139p.

Stripping out the one-off exceptional writedown, pre-tax profits fell by 42 per cent to £108m. The biggest single cause of the decline was the reduction in Inchcape's shareholding in the car distribution business Toyota (GB) from 75 per cent to 49 per cent, which wiped £20m off profits.

But the group was also affected by currency translation, which cost it £10m, and by a deterioration in trading conditions in Asia, South America and Russia.

Operating profits in the motors division fell by 12 per cent to £116m.

Dawes pockets £70m from sale

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

A WARRINGTON-BASED mobile phone entrepreneur who started out renting televisions yesterday pocketed £70m when he sold his cellular phones business to Cellnet.

Martin Dawes, a reclusive businessman, started selling mobile phones on the Vodafone and Cellnet networks when they were first set up in 1985. Martin Dawes Telecommunications now has 800,000 customers and annual revenues of several hundred million pounds.

Cellnet is paying £130m for an 80 per cent stake in the business, the proceeds of which will be divided between Mr Dawes and his family. The remaining 20 per cent is owned by Vodafone, which has an option to sell its stake to Cellnet.

Mr Dawes is expected to reinvest some of the proceeds in his other business ventures, which include an Internet service provider and an innovative messaging service called Breeze.

Peter Erskine, managing director of Cellnet, said MDT was attractive because it had a lot of business users - an area in which Cellnet is keen to expand. "They are a major channel and they have a very large corporate sales force," he said. MDT also runs 15 shops and three call centres.

The business is expected to operate as a separate division within Cellnet and will continue to support its existing customers, 80 per cent of whom are Vodafone subscribers. However, Mr Erskine said an MDT priority would be to sign up new customers for Cellnet.

David Goldie, MDT managing director, will continue to run the business as part of Cellnet.

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AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

TODAY'S BUDGET overshadowed blue chips, with Footsie after a lacklustre session ending just 8.3 points up at 6,208.8. It had moved between a 29 gain and a 30.9 fall. Supporting shares were more resilient: the mid cap index rose 10.8 points and the small cap 11.4p.

Albright & Wilson, the chemical group, was most actively traded as a US bid emerged at 130p a share and CSFB picked up stock on behalf of the bidder. The price gained 19.5p to 129.5p.

Derek Pain, page 18

NEW YORK

US STOCKS were mixed after Friday's record-breaking run. Chip maker Intel rose after settling an antitrust suit, while other stocks were hit by profit-taking. By early afternoon the Dow Jones average was down 37.88 points at 9,693.20, while the Nasdaq Composite was up 30.72 at 2,367.83.

International blue chips such as Procter & Gamble and Johnson & Johnson led the Dow fall, but analysts predicted the Dow could soon top 10,000.

TOKYO

THE BENCHMARK Nikkei index breached the 15,000 level for the first time since December, but profit-taking pushed the index lower in late trade.

The Nikkei eventually closed down 114.95 points at 14,779.05, with the unwinding of corporate cross-shareholdings ahead of the fiscal year end helping to depress share prices. Shares in the financial sector rose after 15 large banks announced plans to restructure, a prerequisite for receiving state assistance.

SAO PAULO

BRAZIL STOCKS were trading higher and the currency steadied as the markets prepared for confirmation of a new IMF deal. The benchmark Bovespa index was trading up 62.03 points at 9,527.12, while the real held its ground above the 2 to the dollar barrier.

The government and IMF were set last night to announce details of a new agreement, which consists of revised terms for the \$41.5bn financial bailout package.

QUITO

ECUADOR debt plunged in value after the government unexpectedly declared a bank holiday to relieve pressure on its financial system. None of the country's 39 banks - which saw heavy withdrawals on Friday - were open to the public.

The currency, the sucre, hit a new low last week amid renewed fears of debt default. Rumours also persist that the government is planning to confiscate all foreign currency in bank accounts, but this has been denied.

INSPIRATIONS

NOVELIST GEOFF NICHOLSON

The Place

I find any stretch of bleak desert wasteland fairly wonderful, in some ways the more anonymous the better, but I'll go for Zzyzx, a former health resort, now a ghost town in the Mojave desert, a few miles outside Barstow, California. It has palm trees, wind-blown sand, curious abandoned buildings and empty swimming pools. It could be sinister, yet I find it totally comforting and reassuring.

The music

Willie the Pimp by Frank Zappa with Captain Beefheart on vocals. This has everything: great lyrics, a fabulous blues vocal and a great strumming extended electric guitar solo. Harold Bloom says that all great art is strange, and of course that doesn't mean that all strange art is great, but there's something about the early stuff of Zappa and Beefheart that still seems as weird and radical as it ever did.

The Film

After Hours by Martin Scorsese. This seems to me an infinitely more honest film than all of Scorsese's homoerotic hymns to violent men who swear a lot. Griffin Dunne wanders around nocturnal New York, pursuing a woman, being pursued by vigilantes, having the sort of edgy, scary, sexy adventures we all dream of having in New York, but are actually rather



relieved to avoid. It's a comedy and so our hero survives but you realise how easily he might not.

The Play

Hamlet was the first bit of Shakespeare I ever really understood and enjoyed. It's a great play to discover when you're an adolescent - all that teenage angst, all that beautiful suffering. Every 17-year-old lad who's having trouble with the parents and school and girlfriends knows exactly how Hamlet feels. More than any other play I can think of, I carry my own version of Hamlet in my head and no production is ever as good as that.

The work of art *Le Violin d'Ingres*. This is Max Ernst's photograph of Kiki de Montparnasse, who has two f-holes collaged into her naked back. There are years when this seems an unacceptably sexist piece of work, other years when it seems sexy, respectful and playful. We "borrowed" the idea for the cover of my novel *Flesh Guitar*, but we made the violin an electric guitar and instead of f-holes we had pick ups and a tremelo arm.

Geoff Nicholson's new novel, *Female Ruins*, is published by Indigo (£9.99)

PAPERBACKS

BY EMMA HAGESTADT AND CHRISTOPHER HIRST

A First Rate Tragedy

by Diana Preston
Constable, £9.99,
269pp



THE FAMILIAR story of Scott's catastrophic polar slog is given additional psychological depth in Preston's highly accomplished account. Scott emerges as an introspective, humane man, prone to the "black dog" of depression and a belief in his own ill-luck. He expended much effort in drumming up sponsorship from Colman's Mustard and Oxo, though he failed to acquire the dog-handling skills which resulted in Amundsen's triumph. Another 350 yards a day and his party would have survived - but we would have lost a classic tale of British pluck.

Sex and the City

by Candace Bushnell
Abacus, £6.99,
228pp



THE MOST encouraging thing about Candace Bushnell's book (and the TV series based on it) is that life for 35-year-old singles is one up on being 25 and single. Bushnell's female thirty-somethings are less likely to sleep with the wrong man, wear the wrong clothes or share with the wrong room-mates. Based on her column for the *New York Observer*, Bushnell's canapé-sized bites of Manhattan life stylishly capture a clubbing and dating scene that you might have thought had died out with Nell's and Jay McInerney.

Diana

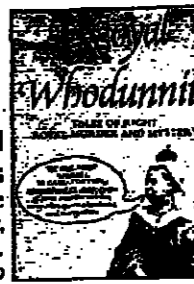
by Julie Burchill
Orion, £7.99,
230pp



LIKE PIGGING out on Kettle Fries, there is a guilty pleasure in consuming Burchill's prose. Irresistibly moreish but mad, this is both a love letter to the most beautiful girl in the class and a no-holds-barred rubbishing of the monarchy ("that monumental blockage in the S-bend of public life"). Diana's excesses, such as the £3,000 a week (excluding clothes) she spent keeping up appearances, are excused, while Charles is lambasted: "Against him, a sloth would have looked wonderful". The flaw in Burchill's thesis is that without the royals, there would have been no Diana.

Royal Whodunnits

edited by Mike Ashley
Robinson, £6.99,
434pp



THESE TWO dozen tales about dark doings within palace walls are painfully bathetic. In a "prequel" to the Scottish play, we learn how Macbeth "allowed a smile to spread across his features" after committing a grisly murder. Such an improvement on Shakespeare's effort. At the court of Richard II, amateur sleuth Geoffrey Chaucer vows, "I will do my best to bring the truth of this affair to light." But this is trumped by Queen Victoria's attempt to save an eminent subject: "You do not look like a murderer of populations, Mr Brunel." Right royal twaddle.

The Ogre's Laboratory

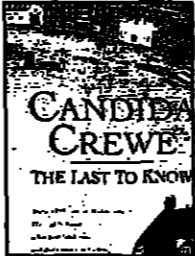
by Louis Buss
Vintage, £6.99,
393pp



THIS DARK spine-chiller features the appropriately named Father Snow, a priest and historian who is posted to a Surrey backwater. Prone to hypnagogic visions, Snow finds that the local stately home is imbued by the spirit of a medieval Moloch called Everard Trevellyn, whose grisly doings he uncovers in the British Museum. Evidence of paedophile activities in the locality suggests that the ogre's baneful influence is still active across the centuries. Despite the obvious debt to Peter Ackroyd, Buss has produced a stylish, disturbing work, its terrors softened by his hero's awkward passion for a local journalist.

The Last to Know

by Candida Crewe
Arrow, £5.99,
264pp



ONE WET weekday evening, Oxford GP Kim Black pops out to the corner shop for some ice cream. He doesn't come home. His wife Sylvie is left with two pieces of curling haddock, and an empty bed. A slim-line plot, but one that Candida Crewe keeps happily bubbling away. An author with a sharp and quirky eye for domestic detail, Crewe builds up a seductively cosy picture of the Black's life in Cowley, an intimate history of their 20-year marriage. Not a story of town and gown, this novel travels well beyond Oxford as Kim embarks on a series of unlikely journeys around Britain.

Book

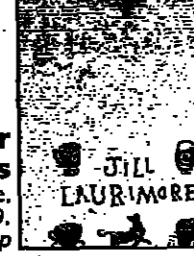
by Whoopi Goldberg
Warner, £5.99,
273pp



IN 25 short chapters, actress, comedian and all-round Clinton groupie, Whoopi Goldberg sounds off on Race, Farting (her favourite topic) and presidential zippers. Like Roseanne, she wears her liberal credentials writ large, as she rails full volume against exploitative chat show hosts and the sinister activities of multinationals. Her pet peeves include men who return from restaurant rest rooms with urine speckled chinos and being referred to as an Afro-American. Yes, the world would be a happier place if we all let it rip; and yes, she is named Whoopi after the Cushion.

Dinosaur Days

by Jill Laurimore
Penguin, £5.99,
339pp



FLISS AND Ivor Harley-Wright are on their uppers, their Suffolk pile sinking into its moat. Their one hope of rescue lies in the sale of their only asset - a collection of Commemorative Drinking Vessels. All they have to do is treat an American lawyer, New York control-freak Tum Klaus, to a weekend in the country. An accomplished mid-Atlantic farce, there are some awkward moments as the Harley-Wrights roll out the red carpet, and several balls of Labrador hair, in honour of their very influential guest. A first novel by a writer who is supremely comfortable in other folks' wellies.

BESTSELLERS

Published in the same week, John Grisham's *The Testament* and *Come Together* by Josie Lloyd and Emyln Rees have battled it out for the top slot for the past three weeks.

Grisham had maintained a slight lead until this week when Lloyd and Rees have finally topped him - but only just. *Station X* stays at the top of the non-fiction chart for the third week.

running: *Men are From Mars...* remains at number two for the fifth week, while Lillian Too's *Little Book of Feng Shui* has hovered at number three or four for five weeks too.

Compiled by Bookwatch from data supplied on sales over seven days ending 28 February 1999
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ORIGINAL FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	PRICE	WEEKLY SALES
1 (2) <i>Come Together</i>	Josie Lloyd & Emyln Rees (Arrow)	£5.99	7,181
2 (1) <i>The Testament</i>	John Grisham (Century)	£16.99	7,085
3 (3) <i>Single & Single</i>	John le Carré (Hodder)	£16.99	4,279
4 (-) <i>Sharpe's Fortress</i>	Bernard Cornwell (HarperCollins)	£16.99	2,971
5 (4) <i>The Thursday Friend</i>	Catherine Cookson (Bantam Press)	£16.99	2,234
6 (-) <i>Caroline's Sister</i>	Sheila O'Flanagan (Poolbeg)	£5.99	1,625
7 (8) <i>Liar Birds</i>	Lucy Fitzgerald (Black Swan)	£5.99	1,574
8 (7) <i>It Means Mischief</i>	Kate Thompson (Bantam)	£5.99	1,319
9 (5) <i>Messiah</i>	Boris Starling (HarperCollins)	£5.99	1,210
10 (6) <i>Southern Cross</i>	Patricia D. Cornwell (Ulrich, Brown)	£16.99	1,183

ORIGINAL NON-FICTION

TITLE	AUTHOR/PUBLISHER	PRICE	WEEKLY SALES
1 (1) <i>Station X: the codebreakers</i>	Michael Smith (Channel 4)	£14.99	4,132
2 (2) <i>Men Are From Mars...</i>	John Gray (Thorsons)	£8.99	3,400
3 (4) <i>Little Book of Feng Shui</i>	Lillian Too (Element)	£1.99	2,379
4 (3) <i>The Year 1000</i>	Robert Lacey & Danny Danziger (Little, Brown)	£12.99	2,125
5 (7) <i>Seafood Odyssey</i>	Rick Stein (BBC)	£18.99	2,098
6 (-) <i>Della's How to Cook</i>	Della Smith (BBC)	£16.99	1,627
7 (6) <i>Ground Force Workbook</i>	Alan Titchmarsh (BBC)	£9.99	1,559
8 (9) <i>Official ITV Formula One Guide</i>	Bruce Jones (Carlton)	£9.99	1,447
9 (5) <i>Birthday Letters</i>	Ted Hughes (Faber)	£14.99	1,432
10 (8) <i>Notes from a Big Country</i>	Bill Bryson (Doubleday)	£16.99	885

SPOKEN WORD

BY CHRISTINA HARDYMENT



A Patchwork Planet
read by David Morse
Random House, 5hrs, £12.99

THERE'S AN old country-western song called "Gentle on My Mind" which sums up the subtle charm of Anne Tyler's novels: you feel the wiser for reading, or in this case, hearing them. David Morse's husky, resigned voice is the perfect medium for Barnaby Gaitlin, supposedly the black sheep of a philanthropic family, in fact the only one of them to have a true understanding of kindness. Miraculously (and this is a book about angels), he and an endearing cast of needy but sassy wrinkles show us how to cope with the inevitable imperfections of the world.



Cold Comfort Farm
read by Eileen Atkins
Penguin, 3hrs, £8.99

ALTHOUGH FEW people now read Mary Webb, the author whom Stella Gibbons was parodying in *Cold Comfort Farm*, the book remains an evergreen classic. It seems a shame to miss a word of it, but this is an exceptionally successful abridgement, guaranteed to dissipate the most recalcitrant gloom. Eileen Atkins thoroughly enjoys herself as she reads Flora Poste's lines with brisk, Roodean-accented competence, smoulders as Seth preaches hellfire as Amos and querulously complains of "something nasty in the woodshed" as matriarch Ada Doom.

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Next Week: Michael Bywater profiles the human face; Christina Patterson interviews Edwidge Danticat; and Miranda Seymour seeks the truth about Pontius Pilate

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Smokescreen won't save supermarkets

ANOTHER DAY, another round of supermarket price cuts. This time it is Asda wading in with 1,000 discounted items in a move that will cost it an extra £50m. Pampers nappies anyone? Come on down; the price is being cut from £12.75 to £2.99. Chicken Tonight curry sauce? Asda certainly knows its market - down from £1.35 to a lip-tickling 99p. Marvelous.



OUTLOOK

Coming just days after Tesco attempted to grab the headlines with a similar round of cuts, and a couple of weeks after the price of bread sank to 7p a loaf in the so-called "bread wars", it is worth asking the question: are these the first shots in a full scale price war? Or are they just bits of tactical PR, turning that just happen to have been launched a couple of weeks ahead of the expected publication of the OFT report on supermarket profiteering?

Life has undoubtedly got a little tougher for our supermarket behemoths. But a look at the official retail figures shows that compared to other sectors, food prices have held up very nicely for the grocers. While footwear and clothing prices were under constant deflationary pressure last year, food prices rose

by 2 per cent. The rise added around 0.5 percentage points to the overall inflation increase of around 2.5 per cent. Certain prices have shown remarkable rises. The price of potatoes in January was 29 per cent higher than the same month a year ago, for example, though supply issues are a major factor here. Tea, where supply is less obvious, went up by 9 per cent, fish by 12 per cent and fresh vegetables by 7 per cent.

Retail prices of pork (one of the items reduced in price by Asda yesterday) fell by 11 per cent. But this was in a year when the wholesale price of pork plummeted because

of oversupply in Europe and the evaporation of demand from Russia and the Far East. Was all that price fall passed on to customers before yesterday's little manoeuvre? You bet it wasn't.

When Asda reported its half year results in December its margins had fallen by just 0.2 per cent year on year. Not much pain there. One thousand sounds a big number, but more than a third of the cuts are confined to poor selling and narrow product ranges like fruit flavoured teas and sun lotion.

There's no getting away from it. As the OFT puts the finishing touches to its report, it is becoming very clear that the supermarket sector is one place where the major players can definitely afford to charge lower prices - and permanently. Government proposals to introduce regular shopping basket price comparisons, plus a kick from the OFT, will force them to do just that.

Nicoli/EMI

ERIC NICOLI has been given an extraordinarily rude welcome by the City for his new job as executive

chairman of EMI. The share price of his present employer, United Biscuits, rose on the news, while that of EMI fell. Analysts were virtually queuing up to say what an unexciting appointment it was, and there was a general booing and hissing in the aisles.

In the circumstances, it is just as well that Mr Nicoli is a thick skinned bruiser with resilience to criticism honed over many years of public service. His reign as chief executive of United Biscuits has been marked by repeated calls for his head as the shares first fell out of the FTSE 100 and then continued their downward slide relative to the index. He survived them all.

And to be fair on Mr Nicoli, the persistent underperformance of the share price under his watch cannot really be described as entirely his fault. He inherited some big problems from his predecessor, Sir Hector Laing, and he's been up against some of the fiercest competition in the world. Even so, Mr Nicoli's experience as a biscuit

seller doesn't obviously suit him to the hard living, social whirl of the music industry. Which is, EMI claims, precisely why he was selected. Does the

City really want a big noise from the entertainment industry, EMI asks. If so it could certainly have had one, but he would have come at a big price. Take what Mike O'Neill demanded for quitting the US for Barclays Bank, quadruple it, add in an American style package of executive perks, and you might be talking about the right ballpark.

Furthermore, any such big hitter would have come with his own mergers and acquisitions agenda. EMI would rapidly have been led into other areas of the international entertainments industry, which may or may not be the thing to do. Nor, EMI insists, does it need another music industry expert for big signings, new acts and everything else that comes with the business.

To have appointed such a person would merely have been to put noses out of joint with the existing couple of head ponchos, Ken Berry and Martin Bandier. They would have marched out in a big huff, and with an ever bigger payoff.

All this seems reasonable enough, as does the contention that the music industry, notorious for late nights, late starts, lax cost control and poor management, needs a healthy injection of profession-

alism at the top. Less clear is whether Mr Nicoli is really that person. There is a smell of compromise and second best about this appointment. Mr Nicoli could prove the sceptics wrong, but he's also there because he's there - because he's a non executive director of EMI and for whatever reasons, he wants a break from biscuits.

Society madness

IN A RECENT speech Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said the Government would for the time being continue to allow mortgage lenders to escape statutory regulation and instead be governed by a voluntary code of conduct. She added, however, that because a mortgage is the biggest financial transaction of a lifetime for most people, there were serious concerns and that the position would be reviewed later this year. In other words, building societies are drinking at last chance saloon.

The Skipton Building Society's decision to stick two fingers up at the code of conduct, reject the Ombudsman's findings, and refuse

to pay his prescribed compensation, pretty much guarantees that this review is going to be a hostile one. Given the sums involved, which are paltry, this was a particularly stupid and naive thing for the Skipton to have done, even though it plainly believes right is on its side.

The upshot is that the Skipton has spoiled it for everyone. Building societies will find themselves annexed to the fast growing empire of the Financial Services Authority along with everyone else. This is unlikely to be a good thing in the long run from anyone's point of view.

There are a lot of mis-sold mortgages; what's more, the complexity and variety of products now on offer means the degree of mis-selling is on the increase. On the other hand, the red tape and costs of complying with statutory regulation will almost certainly damage what is at present a vibrantly competitive market place working to the general benefit of all.

NatPower moves into domestic gas market

NATIONAL POWER yesterday moved into the domestic gas market with a surprise £20m takeover of Calortex, the country's second-biggest independent gas retailer, and hinted it was looking for further acquisitions.

Together with the Midlands Electricity supply business, bought for £180m last year, this deal will give National Power 2.7 million domestic customers and allow it to move more aggressively into the home energy market with "dual fuel" offers. Calortex, a joint venture between Calor and Texaco set up in 1995, now has 500,000 domestic gas customers, giving it 3 per cent of the total market. Centrica, trading as British Gas, still has an 80 per cent share.

BY MICHAEL HARRISON
Business Editor

In terms of independent gas retailers, Calortex is second only to Eastern group with a 13 per cent share. Last year Calortex had sales of £77m and net assets of £29m. Keith Henry, chief executive of National Power, said its aim was to grow the supply business, eventually serving four to five million customers. Other gas and electricity supply businesses are being looked at. A spokesman said there were no plans at present to replace Midlands Electricity or Calortex brands with National Power. The company's industrial and commercial energy supply business trades as Energy Direct.

No price details of the Calortex deal were disclosed, but analysts estimated National Power is paying just under £40 per customer. This compares with the £100 to £160 per customer it paid when it took over Midlands' retail arm.

Meanwhile National Power said it had begun sending out the information memorandum on the sale of its 4,000-megawatt Drax coal-fired station. The sale is expected to raise about £2bn. PowerGen is close to selling off two of its coal-fired stations, Fiddler's Ferry and Ferrybridge, for up to £1.5bn. Observers believe nuclear generator British Energy and Mission Energy of the US, which already owns UK hydro-electric stations, will each buy a station.

Salomon in \$30m payoff

BY ANDREW GARFIELD

JAMIE DIMON, who quit Wall Street investment firm Salomon Smith Barney last November, has agreed a severance package of \$30m with his former firm. Mr Dimon was a well-known Wall Street figure and his departure following huge emerging market losses came as a huge shock to the industry. Mr Dimon was widely seen as heir apparent to Sandy Weill, who steered the firm to a merger with Citicorp to create the world's largest financial services group last year. However, Wall Street insiders say that the rot set in some 18 months before when he and Mr Weill fell out over the status within the firm of the latter's daughter Jessica Biblowicz. Deryck Maughan, the former UK Treasury official who was joint co-chief executive of Salomon's with Mr Dimon, was sidelined at the same time in favour of a new management team headed by Victor Meneses and Michael Carpenter. Mr Dimon's package includes \$5.6m in cash, made up of a 1998 bonus of \$4.3m and two years of his \$650,000 base salary. He will also keep \$6.3m of shares that he already owns and options worth \$20m which he built up over the 16 years he worked for Travellers, Salomon Smith Barney's parent company before last year's Citicorp merger.



Hammerson to spend £400m

HAMMERSON, the property developer, yesterday underlined its confidence in the market with plans to spend up to £400m on shopping centres and offices, writes Francesco Guerrera. Chief executive Ron Spinney (above left, with finance director Simon Melliss) said that this year the company would invest around £200m to develop its existing portfolio, which includes

UK recovery gathers pace

BY DIANE COYLE
AND LEA PATERSON

THE SCENE was set for an upbeat Budget by new figures yesterday suggesting the economic slowdown is easing. Manufacturing output rose for the first time in six months in January, while a survey showed sales on the high street have picked up since the New Year. A monthly index of GDP, the broadest measure of the economy, published by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, also pointed to the likelihood the economy will avoid recession. It edged up in February leading the institute to conclude there is no sign of a decline in GDP.

The rise in manufacturing output in January was just 0.1 per cent, taking it to a level 0.9 per cent lower than a year earlier. Mild weather meant energy output plunged, so total industrial production was down 0.5 per cent during the month. Most sectors remained weak, with only engineering output up (by 0.4 per cent) in the latest three months. Even so, the figures were better than many economists had feared.

Separate official figures backed the view that industry could be at a turning point. The core prices charged by manufacturers at the factory gate were flat in February for a second month running after falling since the summer. Their year-on-year rate of decline slowed to minus 0.5 per cent. The monthly British Retail

Consortium (BRC) sales survey found the value of total sales was 4.1 per cent higher in February than in the same period last year. This was lower than January's 5 per cent growth but ahead of the subdued figures at the end of last year. According to the BRC, consumers are willing to spend, but only if the price is right. Stores that continued their sales into February fared better than those that ended sales in January.

Meanwhile, investment managers' confidence surged by a record amount last month, according to a Merrill Lynch/Gallup survey. Interest rate cuts and relative calm in the financial markets has helped restore faith in Britain's economic prospects. Just over two-thirds of fund managers expect a stronger economy next year, compared to a third in January. As a result, money managers prefer stocks over bonds and have turned buyers of property for the first time since spring last year.

Merrill Lynch also argued that bickering between Europe's politicians and the European Central Bank may have undermined fund manager confidence in EMU. Around 54 per cent believe it is in the UK's interest to join EMU, down from 61 per cent in November 1997. The dollar has replaced the euro as fund managers' favourite currency.

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OTHER SPOT

Engineers start to emerge from the doghouse

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH engineers are at last emerging from the stock-market doghouse. The astonishing descent of the aggressive US venture capitalist Kohlberg Kravis Roberts on the staid old TI Group could underline the overlooked value lurking among the metal bashers.

As if on cue IMI, once part of Imperial Chemical Industries, offered a glimmer of hope that the hard-hit sector is beginning to see the end of its long struggle against the rampant pound and recessionary influences. IMI jumped 17p to 252p in often brisk trading with Merrill Lynch talking about a 350p target. TI, after Friday's 8p cent surge, rose a further 7p to 452p.

Riding at 532p last year IMI has been one of the most significant victims of the engineering crash. But profits at the top end of the range, £152.2m against £146.5m, and indications of a trading pickup encouraged investors.

It was enough to lift Senior Engineering 5p to 137p; Weir 5p to 357p, and the new giant of the engineering industry,

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

group. It managed to acquire 18.6 per cent.

Other chemical groups scored from the action. Yule Catto rose 18p to 288p and Hickson International 3.5p to 40p. Brent International, where bid talks have dragged on, rose 1.5p to 111.5p. The latest story is that the group intends to sell one of its divisions for £25m, before a deal with the hovering predator is completed.

Jockeying for position ahead of the Footsie changes provided the blue-chip highlight. Tomkins, the old style conglomerate with the buns to guns tag, seems to be destined for relegation and fell 10p to 210p. Safeway, the supermarket chain, another endangered Footsie species, gave up 5p to 248.5p but Williams, the security group, hardened a shade to 360p.

South African Breweries arrived to confuse the promotion process. It seemed to be determined to qualify for membership of the exclusive club,

achieving a 48p close, up 20p from Friday "when issued" price, in its first day of full dealings. The minor Billion is one South African group that is already a Footsie member and other Springbok companies are also seeking a London listing. This could lead to four South African companies claiming membership of the blue-chip index.

Corporate Services endangered its membership of the mid-cap index, with a 53p slide to 113p after a profits warning. Sage, the computer group involved in investment rounds, put on 42.5p to 2,012.5p. Reuters, with investment briefings due to start today, improved 18.5p to 902p. National Power, as bid speculation returned, sparked a 10p gain to 494.5p. The under-performing group is seen as ripe for a US assault.

EMI was not in time to welcome its new chairman Eric Nicol; the shares fell 8.75p to 440p. United Biscuits,

which has failed to crunch the numbers under Mr Nicol's stewardship, firmed 2p to 183p. Scottish Media had an eventful session, ending 34p off at 848p. Upbeat comments failed to have much impact with the market, speculating about possible bid action following the Mirror's decision to sell its 18.6 per cent stake.

Widney, the engineer, fell 3p to 37.5p after a special shareholders' meeting was called by shareholders representing nearly 13 per cent of the capital. The "rebels" include SEP Industrial Holdings, unchanged at 10p; they want the board removed.

Expansion at leisure group Queensborough seems to have hit a brick wall. Its plan to buy 46 outlets from City Centre Restaurants to allow it to roll out a new casual catering concept has been hit by its failure to raise cash for the deal. The shares fell 1.5p to 17p with CCR off 2.5p to 58p.

Internet links lifted Methvens, the bookshop chain, 10p to 41.5p. Newcomer Sports Internet had the right associations to close at 88.5p,

TADPOLE TECHNOLOGY slipped 1.75p to 14.5p in brisk trading.

The long time high-tech casualty - the shares were once 307.5p - has enjoyed some support lately because of rumours about a mobile computer it has developed which detects leaks and should make life easier for water companies.

Presentations on the fledgling product, called Java, are said to have been well received and Tadpole may soon be able to produce further details.

an astonishing 24 per cent improvement on the placing price. The company, run by former Leeds Sporting chief executive Chris Akers, is looking for sports operations with web links. Trafficmaster motorised 202.5p to 1,030p following a traffic information link with German giant Mannesmann. Staffware, a software group, rose 50p to 242.5p after an upbeat trading performance.

The recovering crude oil price produced a little firmness on the oil patch. Enterprise Oil, partly on hopes of progress in its talks with Lasmo, firmed 10.75p to 308.75p but Lasmo firmed 5.75p to 127.5p. Tullow Oil, under pressure because of its failure to hit the jackpot in Bangladesh, rallied 4.5p to 56.5p on stories of an Egyptian development.

RJB Mining shaded 0.5p to 61.5p as the possibility of a miners' strike continued to haunt the hard pressed group. Talks about resolving the dispute are due to take place today.

Depressed properties showed signs of life with Tops Estates leading the way with a 20p gain to 117.5p. Netcall jumped 16.5p to 66.5p on reports a bidder is interested in the telecoms group.

SEAQ VOLUME: 946.6M
SEAQ TRADES: 8,763
GILTS: 113.3-0.15

Healthy boost for Nycomed shares after £223m profit

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

NYCOMED AMERSHAM, the Anglo-Norwegian health technology group, yesterday pleased the City with a solid set of results despite tough conditions in some of its important markets.

The company, which produces high-technology equipment to diagnose diseases and test drugs, dispelled some of the stock market's worst fears with a 12 per cent rise in 1998 pre-tax profits to £222.8m. Sales were up 1 per cent to £1.38bn.

The figures were at the top end of analysts' expectations, and triggered a 25p rise in the share price to £158.9m. Bill Castell, chief executive, said sales growth in Nycomed's high-technology products had offset the expected collapse in X-ray turnover.

Star performers were the heart-imaging agent Myoview, which experienced a 43 per cent leap in sales, and iodine seeds, used to treat prostate cancer, where turnover more than doubled. Mr Castell said that this year the division should benefit from an improvement in the US X-ray

market. "We think that the market has bottomed out and should be flat in 1999," he said. But even if X-rays recover, they are unlikely to provide much of a fillip for Nycomed, as they are a low-margin product. The key to the group's future growth lies in its more sophisticated, higher-margin equipment. Myoview and iodine seeds are promising products

NYCOMED AMERSHAM: AT A GLANCE

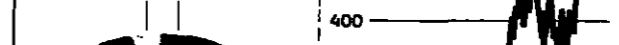
Market value: £2.9bn, share price 460p (+25p)

Trading record	1997	1998	1999*
Turnover (£bn)	1.38	1.39	1.51
Pre-tax profits (£m)	198.60	222.80	253.00
Earnings per share (p)	17.60	20.00	22.00
Dividends per share (p)	4.60	5.3	5.8

*analysts estimates

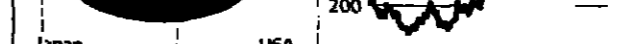
Sales by region

1998



Share price

pence



Source: Datastream

CMG shrugs off fear of downturn

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

CMG, the Anglo-Dutch computer services group, yesterday brushed off fears of a slowdown in the information technology sector with a confident prediction that demand for its services would continue to be strong.

Cor Stutterheim, CMG chairman, admitted that worries about the year 2000 computer bug might cause companies to put projects on hold in the second half. However, he stressed that CMG's long-term ties with customers meant it would continue to outperform the market.

Chris Banks, finance director, said: "Public perception may be of a slowdown in some areas, but we don't see any reason for a slowdown. Demand remains strong."

CMG reported pre-tax profits of £57.5m for the year to December, comfortably ahead of analysts' expectations. Excluding goodwill amortisation and exchange rates, profits grew 58 per cent.

The growth was helped by a sharp rise in margins in CMG's business in the Benelux, its most important geographical area. However, Mr Banks warned that margins - which hit 18.4 per cent last year - were likely to fall to 14 to 16 per cent in the next few years. The company expects to increase margins at its fledgling divisions in France and Germany.

Mr Stutterheim said CMG would continue to expand through acquisitions in continental Europe, but was not interested in buying in the US.

Analysts yesterday upgraded profit forecasts for the company to around £75m, which puts the shares - up 59p to 181.2p yesterday - on a forward earnings multiple of about 45. Although CMG is considered one of the highest-quality IT stocks, most analysts believe that at this level the shares are no more than a hold.

Clouds dim prospects for Thomson Travel

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

THOMSON TRAVEL Group, Britain's largest package holiday company, which came to the market last year, yesterday pledged to fight to hold its position as speculation increased that third-placed First Choice Holidays will fall to a bid. Airtours and Preussag, the dominant shareholder in Thomas Cook, are the most likely buyers.

Thomson held 29 per cent of the UK market for holidays booked through travel agents, ahead of Airtours with 17 per cent and First Choice and Thomas Cook with 16 per cent.

The company said it expected to play "a key role" in the consolidation sweeping the holidays industry in Europe. After seven acquisitions since the float, it is looking for bolt-on deals in Europe, especially in Germany and the Benelux countries.

The comments came as Thomson reported a 10 per cent rise in full-year profits to £122.9m. However, Thomson shares fell 10.5p to 161p, below

THOMSON TRAVEL

share price, pence



Source: Datastream

the 170p issue price last May, on a disappointing trading update. Thomson's bookings for summer this year are 2 per cent lower than the period last year. This is better than the industry average of a 3 per cent fall, but it contrasts with a 5 per cent rise announced by Airtours.

Thomson has proved a disappointing investment for the 500,000 small investors who subscribed. They should be encouraged that capacity has been cut by 3 per cent this summer, reducing the danger of a glut of discounted holidays.

Thomson is expanding outside the UK - it now operates in eight countries - and developing its higher margin specialist holidays with purchases such as the Simply Travel/Headwater business. It is also growing its travel agency chain, with yesterday's £3.5m acquisition of the Robert Sibbald network in Scotland taking its total high-street portfolio to 840.

But there are clouds on the horizon. One is the prospect of Airtours exploiting its strength with more capacity. Another is the uncertainty over First Choice and the possibility of an aggressive overseas operator invading the UK market.

On current-year forecasts of £137m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 16. Merrill Lynch says that is high enough for now.

No black holes at the 'IC'

WHAT IS going on at Investors Chronicle, that revered weekly bible of the small investor? A mole tells us that several freelancers have been sent packing because whoever drew up the budget apparently forgot the magazine comes out weekly rather than monthly, forcing a reassessment of priorities.

Rumour has it the IC is having to find a few hundred thousand in savings to balance the books. An official spokesman for Pearson, which owns IC and its daily stablemate the FT, admitted to some belt tightening but insisted that any talk of black holes was wide of the mark. No doubt all will be revealed and more when Marjorie Scardino delivers the results on Wednesday.

He's all heart

BILL CASTELL, chief executive of Nycomed Amersham, the

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

health technology group, is proud of the revolutionary products the company makes for people with heart defects.

Mr Castell personally trots the globe testing rival heart products - so he must have one of the most tested hearts in the world. The chief executive told me yesterday: "I'm 51 so I need my heart testing anyway." How nice to combine business with pleasure.

Oooh, Doctor!

OXFORD UNIVERSITY recently advertised six open lectures on the history of the political structure of British broadcasting, to be given by "the first News International Visiting Professor of Broadcasting Media and Chief Executive of



Channel 5, Dr David Elstein". The use of "Dr" prompted a kind speculation in media circles over the nature of the doctorate in question.

Given Channel 5's much publicised output of late night soft porn recently, some suggested it might be a medical qualification of some sort. Oxford subsequently admitted the doctorate was their invention, blaming the mistake on the traditional "temp in our office" and adding for the sake of complete accuracy: "News International called to say that he's an MA - from Cambridge."

Millennium bog

THE APPROACH of the year 2000 has led to much mention

in the French language press (France, Switzerland, Belgium, Canada...) of "la bogue" - pronounced "bog". Not a synonym for les toilettes but merely a reference to the millennium bug.

Meanwhile, French mayors impelled to overspend on celebrations of the computer meltdown have coined a variation on noblesse oblige: "millionnaire oblige".

Gas guzzlers

ROBERT BARRIE, an economist with CSFB, is worried about what Gordon Brown will say today on petrol duty. Mr Barrie owns six vintage racing cars - and whenever he races them at Le Mans and other tracks they guzzle petrol, averaging around six miles a gallon. I gather, Ouch. It's just as well Mr Barrie doesn't smoke and collect malt whisky.

All aboard

NOW THAT bonus season is drawing to a close, the City jobs

mercy-go-round has started spinning again. Heading for the exit at the Bishopsgate offices of BTA/Brown, where the takeover by Deutsche Bank has unsettled spirits, are Alex Graham, head of global syndication and European capital markets, and Matthew Collins, head of European debt.

Mr Graham clearly could not measure up to Michael Cohrs, Deutsche's existing global head of syndication who was poached three years ago from Warburg for a rumoured \$2.5m a year. Mr Graham is out to Donaldson Lufkin Jenrette to be their new head of European equity capital markets, while Mr Collins is off to Merrill Lynch to work alongside Guy Dawson, himself a former Deutsche refugee and head of European leveraged finance on a rumoured package of £4m.

That leaves Deutsche and Merrill all square. Deutsche having poached leveraged finance hotshot Tom Gahan from Merrill a few weeks ago.

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Starting	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years
UK	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Australia	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521	2.5521
Canada	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958
France	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595	6.5595
Germany	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363
Italy	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363
Japan	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26	163.26
Netherlands	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037	2.2037
Spain	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36	166.36
Sweden	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663	8.4663
Switzerland	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363	1.7363
USA	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958	0.6958

INTEREST RATES

Country	Rate	Term	Rate	Term	Rate	Term	Rate	Term	Rate	Term
UK	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)	3.15%	Japan	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)
USA	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)	3.15%	Germany	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)
France	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)	3.15%	Italy	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)
Canada	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)	3.15%	Spain	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)
Sweden	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)	3.15%	Switzerland	5.50%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (Ave)

LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est. Open	Open	Close	Settlement
Long Gilt	Mar-99	115.74	116.00	115.73	788.00	9218.00	9218.00
Short Gilt	Mar-99	115.74	116.00	115.73	788.00	9218.00	9218.00
Long Euro	Mar-99	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67
Short Euro	Mar-99	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67	111.67
Long Dax	Mar-99	1573.46	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13
Short Dax	Mar-99	1573.46	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13	1573.13

INDUSTRIAL METALS

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change	Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Aluminium	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Copper	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Gold	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Lead	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Nickel	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Platinum	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Silver	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Zinc	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150

OTHER SPOT RATES

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change	Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Crude Oil	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Gas	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Coal	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Wheat	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Soybeans	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Corn	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Wool	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Iron Ore	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150

MONEY MARKET RATES

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change	Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Crude Oil	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Gas	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Coal	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Wheat	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Soybeans	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150
Corn	1145	1144	4.50	1167.5	1168	6.5	81.4150

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SPORT

Premiership pressures: Pursuit of the championship under stricter refereeing is taking its toll

Prospects of success hidden in the cards

MARK LAWRENSEN, the former Liverpool player now a media pundit, recalls taking over as manager of Oxford United late in the season and discovering his centre-halfs had a brace of bookings between them. "That's when I knew we were in trouble," he said.

Lawrensen was a cultured defender but he knew that there were times when the boot had to go in. Successful teams are made of winners and winners tend not to care whose toes they tread on, or ankles they clip, in pursuit of victory.

Such single-minded determination can prove expensive as it leads to bookings, dismissals and suspensions. In the past this danger was reduced for good sides as they tended to dominate possession and were less likely to commit fouls. Thus the fine disciplinary records of Liverpool and Nottingham Forest in the 80s.

However, as the tempo of the game has increased, and referees become stricter, the better sides have also become regular offenders but this year two of the season's three heavyweights appear to be taking the principle of giving no quarter to extremes.

In all competitions Arsenal and Chelsea have each had seven players sent off, double the Premiership average and only exceeded within the division by Blackburn's nine. Arsenal have also received 66 yellow cards and Chelsea 82 - a figure only surpassed by Everton. This season Chelsea players have missed 31 matches through suspension. There will be more to come for they were at it again at the weekend, having three players booked, one of whom, Roberto Di Matteo, was then sent off. Arsenal had four players booked.

The third contender, Manchester United, also finished a man short, Paul Scholes being dismissed in Sunday's FA Cup tie with Chelsea. This would not have been unusual a few years ago when United were regarded as a snarling, bruising side with Paul Ince, Roy Keane, Eric Cantona, Mark Hughes and Steve Bruce forming a formidable backbone. Now, compared to Arsenal and Chelsea, they are relative angels. Scholes was their fourth player to be dismissed while their bookings tally, from 44 matches, four more than their rivals, is 65. They also top the Fair Play League - Arsenal are joint seventh, Chelsea in the bottom half. United's improvement is not an accident.

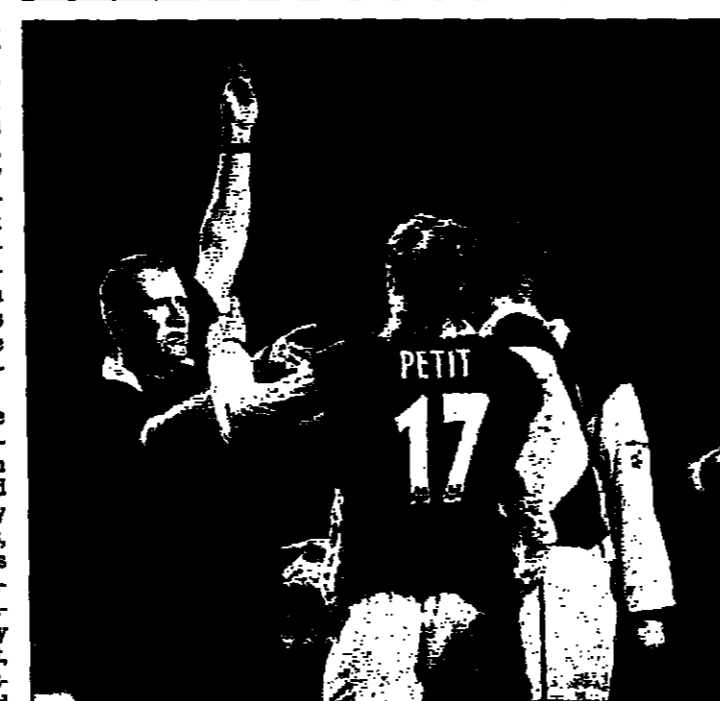
BY GLENN MOORE
Football Correspondent

As well as attempting to cultivate a more appealing team, Ferguson has sought to reduce suspensions which have previously cost United dear in Europe. But Ferguson could not resist criticising Sunday's referee, Paul Durkin. Gianluca Vialli, as usual, kept his own counsel and, as with Saturday's official, Steve Dunn, Ferguson felt the yellow card tackles were "innocuous" but while Scholes' first booking seemed harsh his second invited a caution. Durkin could also have been harder on Roy Keane and Phil Neville. He said yesterday he was happy with his decisions having viewed the match video.

At Highbury, Wenger felt Dunn had "a difficult match", a belief exemplified by Lee Carsley's crunching first-half tackle on Dennis Bergkamp which he, correctly, allowed. Good though the tackle was it was high risk and this is where responsibility comes down to players rather than referees. Had Carsley mistimed his tackle by a fraction he could have been off. Mark Hughes and Dennis Wise may suggest, as they did on Sky, that such tackles are part of the game but it should be clear to players by now that they risk a caution at least.

A look at the scars on Marco van Basten's ankles is justification enough for the stricter refereeing. The answer, for defenders, is to stay on their feet as was brilliantly demonstrated by Marcel Desailly on Sunday. Time and again he not only dispossessed his opponent but also won possession, which is not common when a tackler goes to ground. True, he was booked, but that was for pulling Ole Gunnar Solskjaer back, not for taking his legs from under him.

So far Arsenal and Chelsea have largely survived the glut of suspensions, though Arsenal's European campaign was severely undermined by their indiscipline. This is largely due to the strength of their squads, whether they continue to do so, as the games become ever more important, remains to be seen. Already the Chelsea match-day programme is left to reflect that, given the club's problems with suspensions, international call-ups and injuries, selecting the side "is like running a Sunday morning team". So, at times, is its behaviour.



Chelsea's Roberto Di Matteo (top) and Paul Scholes (bottom right) are dismissed by Paul Durkin during Sunday's FA Cup tie, while (bottom left) Steve Dunn shows Emmanuel Petit red against Wolves in the FA Cup fourth round. *Empics/PA/Allsport*



Wednesday Europe hope

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY may be 11th in the Premiership but the good behaviour of their players and fans may enable them to win a place in Europe next season, writes Glenn Moore.

In previous years an extra European place has gone to representatives of the top three nations in Uefa's Fair Play League, the means by which Aston Villa entered this season's Uefa Cup. Next season it will be decided through domestic Fair Play Leagues, with the highest-placed team not otherwise qualified for Europe being chosen. Manchester United lead the table, followed by

Liverpool, Aston Villa, Sheffield Wednesday and Leicester City.

The Premier League refuses to release the full table but revealed it is judged on and yellow cards, "positive play", "respect towards opponents and officials" and "supporter behaviour".

England are second in Uefa's Fair Play ratings but, due to a change in the selection process, not sure of a place, so there may be only six English clubs in Europe next season - three in the Champions' League and three in the FA Cup winners and fourth and fifth-placed Premiership teams) in the expanded Uefa Cup.

ROLL OF DISHONOUR: THE TOP THREE'S DISCIPLINARY RECORD										
ARSENAL			CHELSEA			MANCHESTER UNITED			PREMIERSHIP DISMISSALS	
	Yellow	Red		Yellow	Red		Yellow	Red		
Patrick Vieira	8	1	Roberto Di Matteo	10	1	Paul Scholes	9	1	Arsenal	7
Nigel Winterburn	9	0	Frank Lebeouf	9	1	Roy Keane	10	1	Aston Villa	2
Emmanuel Petit	6	2	Dennis Wise	6	3	Gary Neville	5	1	Blackburn	9
Martin Keown	6	1	Celestine Babayaro	9	0	Phil Neville	6	0	Charlton	1
Dennis Bergkamp	7	0	Michael Duberry	8	0	David Beckham	6	0	Chelsea	7
Nelson Vivas	6	0	Dan Petrescu	7	0	Jaap Stam	5	0	Coventry	2
Lee Dixon	3	1	Albert Ferrer	6	0	Nicky Butt	2	2	Derby	1
Freddie Ljungberg	4	0	Graeme Le Saux	4	1	Andy Cole	3	0	Everton	6
Giles Grimandi	2	1	Gianluca Vialli	4	1	Jesper Blomqvist	3	0	Leeds	3
Steve Bould	3	0	Jody Morris	3	0	Teddy Sheringham	3	0	Liverpool	4
Stephen Hughes	3	0	Pierluigi Casiraghi	3	0	Dennis Irwin	3	0	Man Utd	4
Ray Parlour	2	1	Marcel Desailly	3	0	Ryan Giggs	2	0	Middlesbrough	2
Tony Adams	2	0	Ed De Goeij	2	0	Ronny Johnsson	2	0	Newcastle	5
Remi Garde	2	0	Tore Andre Flo	2	0	Dwight Yorke	2	0	North Forest	4
Marc Overmars	2	0	Bernard Lambourde	2	0	West Brown	1	0	Sheff Wed	3
Nikolas Anelka	1	0	Gustavo Poyet	2	1	John Curtis	1	0	Southampton	3
			Blaine Goldbach	1	0	David May	1	0	Tottenham	5
			Gianfranco Zola	1	0	Phillip Mulryne	1	0	West Ham	2
Totals	66	7	Totals	82	7	Totals	65	4	Wimbledon	3
									Total	74

England helped by Gatland's poor selection policy

BEFORE THE latest round of Five Nations matches, the odds were: France 1-8, Wales 9-2, England 4-9 and Ireland 7-4. I thought the Irish price was generous, the Welsh distinctly on the mean side. Nevertheless I determined to have a bet, a silly bet, what the Sun likes to call "a bit of fun" whenever it has done anything particularly reprehensible.

So I invested, as the bookmakers put it, £20 (tax added) in a Wales-Ireland double. I thought I would go down at the first hurdle in Paris but that I might scrape over in Dublin, by which stage of the race, of course, it would be too late.

But the race went quite the other way. Ireland were a smugged copy of those who had beaten Wales - unrecognisable as the outfit who had



ALAN WATKINS

barried France to within a missed penalty of defeat on the opening Saturday of the season.

This is not hindsight on my part, but I thought Warren Gatland, the Irish coach, had made a mistake

when he chose Victor Costello before Eric Miller at No 8. In form, as he is, Miller is one of the best back row forwards in the competition. And though a lad as big and strong as Costello may be able to intimidate lesser mortals, he is not going to cause the slightest concern to the likes of Lawrence Dallaglio and Richard Hill, to say nothing of Tim Rodber and Martin Johnson.

Why, I wonder, does Gatland not restore Reggie Corrigan at loose-head instead of playing Peter Gloheesy out of position? Or play two genuine jumping locks in Malcolm O'Kelly and Jeremy Davidson? Or make the place-kicking cast iron with Simon Mason? Or recognise the most penetrative Irish back around, Darragh O'Mahony of Bedford?

Perhaps these changes would not have been enough to beat England. But there was a 15-minute period at the beginning of the second half when Ireland could have taken a convincing lead with a converted try. However, the backs lacked guile.

Exactly the same could be said of the England backs for long stretches of the match. Even so, Clive Woodward said afterwards that it had been the best England performance under his stewardship; Dallaglio joined in to much the same effect; they were both echoed by assorted reporters; while Philip Matthews, that fine former Irish No 6, gave his opinion that England would have no difficulty in beating France at Twickenham.

They all seem somewhat easily

pleased. In particular, I am less confident than Matthews about the outcome of the French match. France played badly against Ireland though they won. They did not play badly against Wales but they lost. When they come to Twickenham their pride will be formidable.

Though I think it eccentric to play Eddie Ntamack at full-back, in spite of his three tries, and that France must have two better centres than yet astonish us all in a few weeks.

So may Wales at Wembley in April. Once again the enemy may be what the writer Hugh Kingsmill termed "dawnism". But at last Graham Henry, the coach, seems to have put together a plausible front row. Peter Rogers

was born in Llanelli, played most of his rugby in South Africa, and then joined London Irish. But he has played little for their first team this season and little rugby of any description. Choosing him was a risk by Henry which turned out to be justified, though he was substituted by Andrew Lewis in the second half.

With six replacements now allowed, the Welsh coach took the prudent and, as far as I know, unprecedented course of having an entire front row - Lewis, Barry Williams and that old war horse John Davies - on the bench ready to run on, if necessary, for Rogers, that other war horse Garin Jenkins and Ben Evans, who, like the Quinnell brothers, had an excellent game. All of a sudden, Henry is a victim

of what the politician Peter Walker once called the problems of success. He has to decide whether, subject to fitness, to restore Gareth Thomas, Allan Bateman and David Young for the theoretically friendly match against Italy in Treviso which precedes the Wembley encounter with England. To drop Evans, in particular, would be harsh after his Paris performance.

The whole season has been interesting from the start. Now it is fascinating. If England succeed in winning the Grand Slam by beating France and then Wales, they will have proved themselves to be a very good side indeed - a rather better side than I think they now are, despite the satisfaction after the Irish match.

Elkington profits as Monster bites back

GOLF

BY DOUG FERGUSON
in Miami

STEVE ELKINGTON has won 10 times on the PGA Tour, but never quite like this. In a span of two hours, he took three putts on the 18th green on the Blue Monster, kicked in the side of a scoring trailer, watched the back nine from his room at the resort, warmed up for a play-off and then accepted a first-place cheque for \$540,000 (\$341,000) without hitting another shot. The Doral-Ryder Open might not have had its usual array of star names, but it rarely lacks drama. Sunday was no exception.

Despite a bogey on the final hole, Elkington won the Doral in a thrilling finish that he never saw. He was on the practice range preparing to go back out to No 18 for a play-off when the toughest closing hole on the PGA Tour swallowed up Ernie Els and Greg Kraft. "Thank goodness they had to play that hole," said Elkington, who finished at 13 under 275 for a one-stroke victory over Kraft. "It's a very dangerous hole."

It nearly always decides the champion at Doral, and Elkington was well aware of this when he stood over a five-foot putt for par, trying to cap a 63 that he felt certain would be enough to win.

"I wanted to send a message," he said. "I didn't want to see them go 'Oh, he bogeyed the last. That's good.' I didn't want to leave any crumbs out there." But he did, and it was not long before Els and Kraft made a move. Els, trying to win his second straight 72-hole event on tour, scrambled from the sand for one par after another before converting one of only three birdie attempts on the back nine, a 12-footer on No 17 to tie.

Kraft, in the group behind, trying for his first official win on the PGA Tour, caught Elkington with a birdie on the 603-yard 12th, gave one back from the bunker on No 13 and re-joined the lead with a four-foot birdie on 17. Then the fun began.

Els was haunted by pulling everything left at the worst possible time. With just 154 yards to the flag at the last his eight iron landed in the rough near the red hazard line. Needing to get it close to save par and force a play-off, the chip failed to get up the hill and tricked back down to virtually the same position.

Next came Kraft. With a five-iron he caught the ball so fat that it fell a good 20 yards short of the green, but he saved bogey for a 71 and second place by himself.

Justin Rose needs to take a step back according to John Bickerton, who took second place in the Algarve Portuguese Open on Sunday. The £44,000 collected lifted him to eighth on the Order of Merit and 13th in the Ryder Cup points table and brought his season's earnings to more than £100,000.

It was the perfect demonstration of what the Challenge Tour has to offer - Bickerton earned his card for this season by finishing sixth overall on that tour last year. He believes that Rose needs the same experience to end a streak of 15 consecutive missed cuts since he turned professional after his fourth place in the Open last year.

"I feel sorry for Justin," said Bickerton after his Penina play-off loss to Van Phillips, another Challenge Tour graduate. "He's having to deal with a lot of pressure at such a young age. The Challenge Tour would not be a bad thing to experience."

"You get used to travelling around Europe week after week, playing 72-hole tournaments and building up your confidence. Once you've done that then you can build from there."

Weather looks set fair for Thunder

Three years ago Super League rugby saw a false dawn in Paris but the latest new team show promise. By Dave Hadfield

AS GATESHEAD THUNDER defied the great elemental forces of the North-east - rain, wind and Newcastle United - to make an encouraging start to life in Super League on Sunday, minds inevitably drifted back to another night three years ago. Gateshead are the second new franchise to enter the competition. Enthusiasm for the way they seem to have many things right has to be tempered by memories of what happened to the first.

On the face of it, Paris St-Germain made an even better start than the Thunder. They were not merely competitive; they beat Sheffield Eagles 30-24 and did so at the Charley Stadium in front of a crowd which, at more than 17,000, was three times as many as Gateshead attracted to their inaugural fixture. It proved a false dawn, however. Paris won only two more matches that season and, within two years, they were extinct and virtually unremembered, with crowds having slumped to a low of 500.

It sounds like a bad omen for the Thunder, but there should not be too much read into it. The two events do have more in common than locals speaking a strange language and the presence of Kath Hetherington, then a Sheffield and now a Gateshead director. Both involve winning over an alien audience for an unfamiliar sport, but there, Gateshead

hope, the similarities end. There is one immediate difference. Paris's crowds that first night and subsequently were inflated by free tickets and an even more free use of the imagination.

"Everyone at Gateshead paid," said the Thunder's chief executive, Shane Richardson. Anything else would amount to the new club conning itself and, as a genuine attendance, 5,960 represents a decent base to build on.

The French, after all, was heavily stacked against them, with a combination of live television, foul weather and Alan Shearer and Co strutting their stuff across the city. "All things considered, it was a very encouraging start," Richardson said.

The difference should be that at Gateshead, unlike Paris, a greater proportion of that opening night attendance will be back, despite their new team's 24-14 defeat by Leeds. Unlike Paris, who had deepening contractual problems with their players, Gateshead will get better.

Judging by the way they played in the wet and in their first competitive game, they will provide compelling entertainment when they get a dry track to run on and the sun on their backs.

Like the Thunder, Paris eventually brought in large numbers of Australian players



Gateshead experiences the razzmatazz of Super League as Captain Thunder leads the cheers against Leeds on Sunday

Ben Duffy

for quite simply, there is a surplus. Dean Bird is the common link between the two, returning from Adelaide to join his second European Super League club, but that is as far as the comparison goes.

The French-based side did not have players of the calibre of Kerrod Walters, Willie Peters or Brett Grogan and, as the season goes on, the difference in quality will become more apparent.

Paris were eventually re-

garded as cuckoos in the nest of their parent organisation, the Paris St-Germain football club. Gateshead's equivalent relationship with their local council, whose energetic support for a project that puts the town on the national sporting map, is not in doubt. Paris were permanently broke; Gateshead announced their arrival as serious players with one of the biggest club sponsorship deals ever tied up.

The administration in Paris

was a mess - and did not get any better when Super League and Maurice Lindsay launched a "rescue" operation. As the picture developed, nobody was really sure who was in charge. At Gateshead, there is no debate about it: it is the creature of Richardson and Hetherington, who between them have an expertise in the field that underpins the whole dream.

There were uplifting nights at the Charley and a longer-term commitment to the idea

might by now have paid dividends. Their fireworks worked on opening night; Gateshead's did not, but that was the only real dampener on the proceedings.

There are, of course, things that need to be worked on. A ground announcer explaining play to newcomers only helps if he gets it right; the club's mascot, Captain Thunder, needs to return to his own planet in some distant galaxy for further training.

But these are minor matters. What really counts is that Gateshead should build on a solid start, make progress towards their declared aim of fielding a British team and be given time to prove their worth to the game.

It all looked feasible on Sunday night. We might have said something similar after Paris's debut three years ago, but some vital lessons about what it takes to thrive in Super League have surely been learned since then.

Britain to fight S Africa cup bid

By Dave Hadfield

GREAT BRITAIN was resisting a rival bid from South Africa to stage the 2000 World Cup when the game's International Federation began its meeting in Sydney today. The millennium tournament was awarded to Britain last year, but the South Africans will try to persuade the Federation to change its plans this week.

That move will be greeted with incredulity by the British representatives at the meeting, who still recall the embarrassment caused to the game by the cancellation of the planned World Nines in Johannesburg last month. Britain also regards any arguments over the World Cup as being too late.

"It's a done deal as far as we are concerned, but South Africa are welcome to make a bid for 2002," said the Rugby League's chief executive, Neil Tunncliffe. He will also want to end any doubts over the Tri-Series against Australia and New Zealand this year. The Kiwis have expressed unease about that tournament and Britain could call their bluff by suggesting an Ashes series instead.

The Gateshead prop, Andrew Hick, has become the first player from the new club to be summoned to a disciplinary hearing, over an alleged trip in their inaugural game against Leeds.

The referees' director, Greg McCallum, warned coaches yesterday that lying on in the tackle, which has crept back into the game this season, will not be tolerated.

Britain's leading referee, Russell Smith, has had to pull out of tonight's Varsity match at Richmond because he has flu. Another professional referee, Robert Connolly, takes over for a match in which Cambridge hope to continue their run of six wins over Oxford in their last seven meetings.

Huddersfield's Great Britain scrum-half, Bobbie Goulding, does not have a broken arm as had been feared.

Oxford ensure league status

OXFORD UNIVERSITY warmed up for today's Varsity Match with a 3-1 win against Isis. However, Saturday's game did little to grace the official opening of their water-based artificial pitch at Iffley Road - other than to almost certainly ensure their National League survival. Cambridge, on the other hand, saw their chance of reaching the National League flicker away by drawing with Crossky in the Premier Holidays East Premier.

Indeed, it could have been worse for the Light Blues but for an equalising goal from Roger Wilcock with the last touch of the match. The former Oxford Blue Adam Laird, on whom much of Cambridge's hopes will depend this afternoon in Milton Keynes, scored their opening goal.

In another eventful game in the South, leaders Wimbledon twice came from behind to beat City of Portsmouth, with the equalising and winning goals coming from Rob Stone and

Samaranch braced for vote

WITH THE International Olympic Committee president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, facing a crucial confidence vote next week, the question is not whether he will win the motion but whether it will be by secret ballot or public acclamation.

With the world closely monitoring every move, the IOC makes in the wake of its biggest corruption scandal, officials expect the committee will be criticised no matter which procedure is used to endorse

OLYMPIC GAMES

Samaranch, the 78-year-old Spaniard, who has faced calls for his resignation from critics outside the IOC, announced in January that he would put his leadership to a vote of confidence at a special general assembly in Switzerland on 17 to 18 March.

Samaranch has been overwhelming support among IOC members for his continuation in office. The confidence mo-

tion, however, is not listed on the 10-point agenda for next week's meeting, where the assembly will vote on reform proposals and expulsion of members involved in the Salt Lake City bribery scandal.

IOC members said that the confidence question is still being debated among the general membership and the leadership.

Samaranch has been canvassing the opinions of IOC members and is expected to set-

tle on a formula later this week. Executive board member Jacques Rogge said members are divided into two camps: those who favour a secret ballot and those who prefer a round of applause or show of hands. "What counts is not the system," he said. "What counts is whether [Samaranch] can have broad support, and I believe he will." Samaranch, elected as IOC president in 1980, has never faced a contested re-election campaign.

Jones is target for French clubs

THE WELSH giant Derwyn Jones is ready to turn his back on his country to begin a new career - in France. The 5ft 10in Cardiff second row is out of contract at the Arms Park at the end of the season and is being trailed by a number of clubs across the Channel, with Bourgoin the favourites to sign him.

The lock, capped 19 times for Wales, last played against Australia in 1996. He said: "There

RUGBY UNION

has been some interest from clubs in France. It is early days yet, but I am looking at my options and have been with Cardiff a long time. I have to look at what is best for me, but it will be a huge wrench to leave."

"However, with the situation with Cardiff and Welsh Rugby Union this season the club has allowed me to speak to other clubs."

The Tongan centre, Pita Taufanua, will be flown to a New Zealand hospital today for an assessment of the spinal injuries he suffered in last weekend's World Cup trial match against Georgia.

Taufanua was left unconscious after taking a heavy tackle and falling beneath several players in Saturday's fixture.

Doctor Aisake Takau, of the Vaioa Hospital, told Radio

Tonga yesterday that Taufanua had been partially paralysed but that the extent of his injury could not be determined at Vaioa.

Taufanua said he was optimistic about the player's recovery when he is taken to Auckland Hospital.

Taufanua plays for West Hartlepool in this country but returned home for the trial match in which the hosts beat Georgia 37-6.

Spurs attract at 9-2 for FA Cup

IT IS A rare occurrence to find Manchester United at odds of 5-1 to win a six-runner race, yet Ladbrokes have the Premiership leaders at that price to win the FA Cup after their failure to dispatch Chelsea at Old Trafford on Sunday. Barnsley, at 40-1, are the only team deemed less likely to lift the Cup.

The extent of United's difficulties is emphasised by their price of 9-4, with Coral, to triumph in Wednesday's replay at Stamford Bridge. The attractive bet there, given how closely matched the two sides are and their unwillingness to give anything away in defence, may be the 80-minute draw at 9-4 with William Hill.

With a semi-final against Arsenal looming for whoever progresses, the other side of the draw looks a more attractive proposition for finding the Cup winners. Newcastle, having found their scoring touch, are as short as 11-4 with Stanley but they will not face a side as weak as Everton again in the competition and even the 4-1 gen-

SPORTS BETTING

By John Cobb

erally on offer looks mean. Better to stick with the Cup specialists Tottenham, who must eliminate Barnsley at Oakwell in their postponed sixth-round tie and then Newcastle in the semi-final. Ladbrokes rate them 2-1 chance to triumph at Wembley, so the 9-2 on offer with Stanley looks healthy.

FA CUP 6TH ROUND REPLAY

	C	H	L	S	T
Chelsea	5-4	5-4	11-8	6-4	6-5
Draw	7-4	8-4	2-1	11-5	11-5
Man Utd	9-4	7-4	7-4	6-4	15-8

Stamford Bridge, 9.45pm

To win the FA Cup

	C	H	L	S	T
Arsenal	8-4	2-1	2-1	8-4	8-4
Newcastle	4-1	4-1	4-1	4-1	3-1
Chelsea	4-1	8-2	8-2	8-2	8-2
Sheff Wed	7-5	4-1	3-1	8-2	4-1
Man Utd	9-5	4-1	4-1	4-1	4-1
Barnsley	30-1	40-1	40-1	40-1	40-1

C Coral, H Wm Hill, L Ladbrokes, S Stanley T Tot

SEDGEFIELD

HYPERION
2.00 Just Jake 2.30 Phar Echo 3.00 Castle Clear 3.30 The Snow Burn 4.00 Joe Jagger 4.30 Gus Cunningham 5.00 Calius

INSPECTION: 7.45am
GOING: Soft
Left-hand, undulating course. Easy fences and long run-in.
Course is 1m SE of town near junction of A689 and A77. Bus service from Stockton station (10) or Durham station (10m).
ADMISSION: Paddock 15 (0.4p) 25p; Course 15p. Free all enclosures March 10. CAR PARK: free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 8-252 (25.4%), G M Moore 10-114 (16.7%), B Eason 10-21 (14.9%), J H Johnson 10-11 (10.1%), J H Johnson 10-11 (10.1%), J H Johnson 10-11 (10.1%).
LEADING JOCKEYS: P Wren 44-75 (25.1%), G Lane 21-26 (24.1%), L Wren 10-108 (14.7%), A Dobbin 15-103 (17.4%).
FAVOURITES: 222 wins in 504 races (27.4%).
LONG DISTANCE TRAVELLERS: Peninsular Boy (230) & Punters Bar (230) have been sent 322 miles.
SUNSHINE FIRST TIME: Timbucktoo (4.00), River Douglas (4.30), Steelers Dream (4.30).

2.00 J WADE CONDITIONALS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (G) £2,000 2m 1f

	G	L	S	T
4-1000 NOBLE NORMAN (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 12	1	2	3	4
2-1000 TENNESSEE KING (M) T Eassey 9 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-1000 PANDORA LORO (M) J H Johnson 5 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-1000 BEN MASHAH (M) Mrs M Reveley 5 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-1000 COURT JOKER (M) (C) M Reveley 7 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-1000 KATYHAWK (M) B Eason 7 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-1000 KATYHAWK (M) B Eason 7 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-1000 KATYHAWK (M) B Eason 7 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-1000 KATYHAWK (M) B Eason 7 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-1000 KATYHAWK (M) B Eason 7 11 11	37	38	39	40

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Coneyford 12st, Just Jake 12st, Bettings: 7-2 Court Joke, 4-1 Ben Mashah, 9-2 Tennessee King, 7-1 Wren, 8-1 Just Jake, 10-11 Konyale, 12-1 Arrogant, 14-1 others

FORM VERDICT

Just Jake, racing off a 100lb lower mark, has something in hand of four of these rivals on Newcastle turfing last week. He should make a bold attempt, but may have to give beat to TENNESSEE KING, who is thrown in on his old form, shaped well on his first outing for his new stable and can improve for the run.

2.30 EQUINAGE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 3m 110yds

	G	L	S	T
1-40222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	1	2	3	4
2-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-10222 FOR CATHAL (M) Mrs M Reveley 6 11 11	37	38	39	40

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Kinds Groovy 6 11 11, Bettings: 3-1 For Cathal, 4-1 Cypress Avenue, King Pin 5-1 Peninsular Boy, 7-1 Phar Echo, Rhinogun, 14-1 Kinds Groovy

FORM VERDICT

For Cathal looks the one to beat on his latest second to Brinkley, but carrying a big weight under these conditions could leave him vulnerable and it could pay to take a chance on PILGRIMAGE at bigger odds. He looked a promising stayer in 1997, and after a place-upper in Newcastle he could now be ready to come back and fulfil his potential.

3.00 FRANK SCOTTS MEMORIAL NOVICE CHASE (G) £8,000 added 2m 110yds

	G	L	S	T
1-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	1	2	3	4
2-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	37	38	39	40

Bettings: 8-1 Barnbrough Boy, 5-2 Fennan, 7-2 Castle Clear, 25-1 others

FORM VERDICT

BARNBROUGH BOY has shown enough lately to think that he is back in form, and off a low mark at his favourite track, he could prove just too strong for Silas Shearer and Mister Muddypaws. This is quite open, however, and The Snow Burn and Punters Bar are perfectly plausible winners too.

3.30 MCEWAN'S DURHAM NATIONAL HANDICAP CHASE (G) £15,000 3m 4f

	G	L	S	T
1-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	1	2	3	4
2-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	37	38	39	40

Bettings: 10-1 Silas Shearer, 4-1 Mister Muddypaws, The Snow Burn, 5-1 Punters Bar, 5-1 Punters Bar, 14-1 Punters Bar, 25-1 Barnbrough Boy

FORM VERDICT

DARBY STREET has shown enough lately to think that he is back in form, and off a low mark at his favourite track, he could prove just too strong for Silas Shearer and Mister Muddypaws. This is quite open, however, and The Snow Burn and Punters Bar are perfectly plausible winners too.

4.00 ROBIN & JOHN SIMPSON MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (G) £5,000 2m 5f

	G	L	S	T
1-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	1	2	3	4
2-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-22122 BARNBROUGH BOY (M) T Eassey 6 11 11	37	38	39	40

Minimum: 10st. True handicap weights: Another Red 12st, Lord Ralston 12st, Bettings: 10-1 Silas Shearer, 4-1 Mister Muddypaws, The Snow Burn, 5-1 Punters Bar, 5-1 Punters Bar, 14-1 Punters Bar, 25-1 Barnbrough Boy

FORM VERDICT

Recent recent form is in on the ground here as punters should tread warily. COPPERHURST is a tentative choice given her recent run last time but she should be effective in the conditions and, on her best form, is fairly treated despite being out of the handicap.

4.30 LEVY BOARD 'NH' MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,250 added 3m 3f 110yds

	G	L	S	T
1-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	1	2	3	4
2-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	5	6	7	8
3-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	9	10	11	12
4-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	13	14	15	16
5-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	17	18	19	20
6-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	21	22	23	24
7-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	25	26	27	28
8-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	29	30	31	32
9-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	33	34	35	36
10-10000 COPPERHURST (M) Mrs M Reveley 7 11 11	37	38	39	40

Bettings: 8-1 Silas Shearer, 4-1 Mister Muddypaws, The Snow Burn, 5-1 Punters Bar, 5-1 Punters Bar, 14-1 Punters Bar, 25-1 Barnbrough Boy

FORM VERDICT

RIVER DOUGLAS has a bit to find with Newmarket Hay on his form, but that could be misleading given he would have achieved a higher rating at Carlisle but for a blunder. He is on the upgrade.

5.00 ALPHEMIC SOLUTIONS NOVICE HURDLE (G) £3,000 2m 5f 110yds

M H Naughton (5)	7	00 JEROME (21-1)
N Horrocks (6)	7	00-67 GUILF POT
A S Smith	8	05 DELAYED RE
C McCormack (3)	9	32222 SAKON VICT
S Taylor	10	0 IRONSIDE PR
K Johnson		
B Harding		
BETTING: 11-8 Cetus, 11-		
15-1 Ironside Princess, 25-		
F		
133b. Lord Rulph Set		
Joe Jagger Set 2b.		
Judge, 11-2 Corbleu,		
Others		
CARUS and Scraphatus		
have to prove their star		
solid, so he is preferred		

Britain reaping reward for investment

BRITISH ATHLETICS, bankrupt 18 months ago, is moving towards next year's Sydney Olympics on a growing tide of achievement and investment.

Speaking after the best British performance at the World Indoor Championships since the event began in 1985, Max Jones, performance director for UK Athletics, revealed that the domestic sport will receive increased levels of National Lottery funding of between £18m and £20m for a six-year period finishing after the 2004 Olympics in Athens.

The Lottery Sports Fund has accepted the sport's six-year plan - applicable from October last year - which involves increasing the annual amount of funding for athletes from £2.4m to £3m.

Of that figure, the firm currently given towards living expenses for individual competitors will remain the same, while there is an in-

ATHLETICS

By MIKE ROWBOTTOM
in Maebashi, Japan

crease in the amount to cover UK Athletics costs such as travel, small international meetings, health cover, physiotherapy and warm-weather training.

That total is likely to be supplemented over the next few years by additional funding for training bases within the recently announced National Academy network.

In order to secure this funding, Jones and his colleagues have had to agree performance targets for a range of forthcoming events - for example, seven medals at this summer's outdoor World Championships in Seville, six at the Sydney Olympics, and eight four years later in Athens. The sport's case was greatly enhanced by last season's performances from British athletes, who re-

tained the European Cup and won a record nine European titles in Budapest.

"There was no direct correlation," Jones said. "But I'm sure Budapest did a lot of good in a lot of areas. There were 9.75m British television viewers watching us on the last day. When we came back, the picture had changed for us."

Many media observers, Jones added, had pointed out that last summer's success had come in a European year, and that winning at global level in the 1999 world indoor and outdoor championships would prove much harder. "They were right," Jones said. "But three golds and two bronzes in Maebashi has set us up well for the year ahead, in the same way as our success did in last year's European indoors at Valencia."

He accepted that there was a price to pay for funding that was so target-orientated. "It's pressure," he said. "You are only as good as your last

Games or championships. But I'd rather have pressure than no money. And if the Lottery authorities are going to shove us £3m every year, they should expect to get something back long term." Lottery money now supports Jones and a staff of six other performance directors for specific events or age groups within British athletics.

"We are all free to concentrate on getting the best out of British athletes," he said. "At world level, a difference of one per cent in preparation can make the difference between someone winning gold or coming fourth."

Jones also praised another influential feature of the British success, namely Linford Christie, who has coached Darren Campbell and now Jamie Baulch to major titles in the space of nine months. "It's obvious he's got a gift for coaching almost as good as his gift for running," Jones said. "Most

superstars do nothing else in the sport when they retire because they've got everything they need. I hope that Linford is going to last the course and keep on coaching."

"I would love to use him more within our set-up. It's sometimes a matter of pinning him down although he does sit on the Performance Athletic Services board."

"Linford has been there, done it and got the T-shirt. When you touch greatness like that it does rub off on other athletes."

Ashia Hansen, who added the World Indoor triple jump title to those she had won at last year's European Indoor Championships and Commonwealth Games, was assisted in her preparations for Maebashi by the fact that her coach, Aston Moore, was able to work with her on a full-time basis thanks to Lottery funding. Moore was in Maebashi with Hansen - admittedly after that other,

unofficial patron of the sport, Sir Eddie Edey, had paid for his air fare.

"When Aston is with me at a competition it means I can relax and concentrate on my performance rather than having to worry about the technical aspects of my jumping," Hansen said. "Having to do all that for yourself is a big pressure."

Jason Gardener, who broke Linford Christie's five-year-old European 60m record in finishing third behind the Americans Maurice Greene and Tim Harden, has also benefited from a Lottery grant which has allowed him to train full-time in his native city of Bath.

"Without that I would not have been able to achieve what I have here," he said. The funding helped Gardener make the transition from promising junior to achieving senior at a time when his career was stuttering. Three years ago he was



Ashia Hansen shows off her triple jump gold Allsport

favourite to take the European indoor 60m title in Stockholm but false started twice in the final. Last season he lost form at the crucial time, failing to qualify for the European Championships, where two other young sprinting talents, Darren

Campbell and Dwain Chambers, made a name for themselves with gold and silver medals respectively.

Now Gardener has put himself back in the frame as Britain looks forward to Seville with justified confidence.

Irvine the maverick lands big knockout

David Tremayne on the Irishman who let his driving do the talking with his first F1 win in Melbourne

HE WAS the enfant terrible of Formula One. The man whose debut, at Suzuka in 1993, passed into legend afterwards following a punch-up with the late Ayrton Senna. Two races later, at the start of the troubled 1994 season, he was banned for three races after triggering a four-car accident in the Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos.

But on Sunday Edmund Irvine, the 33-year-old from Bangor, earned the respect of his peers with a commanding and polished first grand prix victory.

Ever since he joined Ferrari at the start of the 1996 season, as partner to Michael Schumacher, Irvine has played the pragmatist. He knows that he lacks his illustrious partner's sheer pace and panache, and he has made no bones about being prepared to ride shotgun for him whenever the occasion has demanded. Many of his fellow drivers, some of them doubtless jealous of his Ferrari drive and the significant remuneration it commands, have written him off as a journeyman who lacks ambition, and it has pleased Irvine to let them think what they want. Insouciance, after all, has long been his trademark.

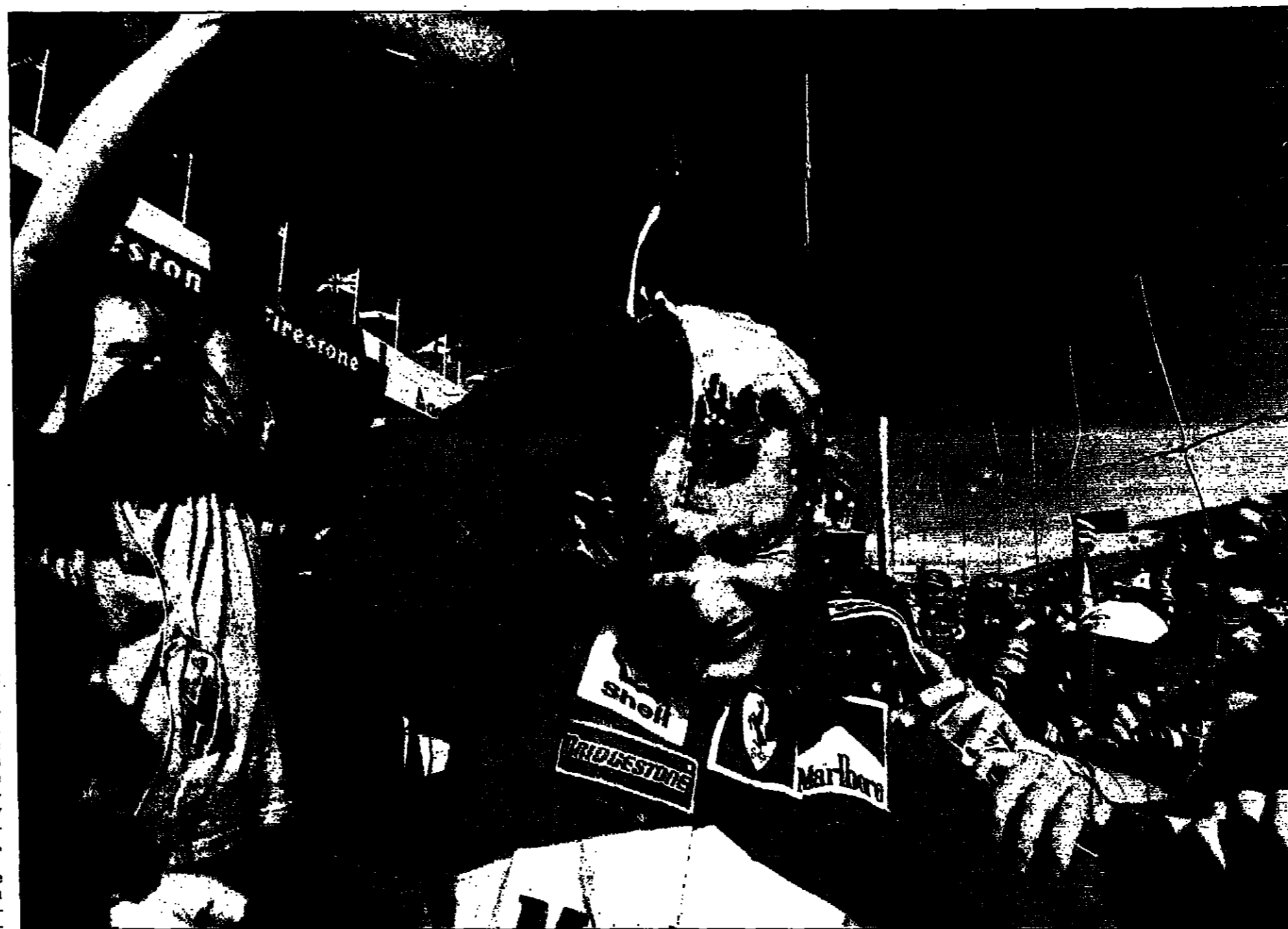
It was what got him into hot

water with Senna in that Japanese Grand Prix six years ago and thrust him into the spotlight. In difficult conditions, Irvine was fighting for fifth place with Damon Hill when Senna came up to lap him. But when Irvine felt Senna was holding him up, he had no qualms about re-passing him.

Eventually Senna overtook for good, but he was well stoked up as he strode down to the Jordan office afterwards. Senna demanded to know how Irvine dared to race when he was being lapped, and what he thought he was doing, whereupon Irvine lit his fuse by informing him that he had repassed him because he, Senna, wasn't driving fast enough.

Irvine was sitting on the table at the time, drawing in a manner that made his disrespect for Senna all too evident, and the deliberate provocation proved too much for the Brazilian, who swung a punch. As Senna was hustled away, the Ulsterman lost no time communicating to the world that he couldn't care less. "It wasn't even a good punch," he said.

When he was summoned to Paris in the aftermath of the Brazilian incident which sent Jos Verstappen's Benetton bar-



Champagne moment: Ferrari's Eddie Irvine soaks up Formula One success for the first time in the Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne on Sunday Allsport

rel-rolling over his Jordan, the same take-it-or-leave-it attitude helped Irvine to a three-race ban instead of the one-race exclusion that had initially been levied, but secretly Bernie Ecclestone, the Formula One impresario, liked the maverick's style.

It is what has made Irvine so frequently misunderstood. He lives life on his own terms, and

does not care if others cannot cope with it. In an era of political correctness, he has a commendable penchant for straight talking. Shortly before he joined Ferrari, he told a press conference in front of an Italian press famed for making life hell for Ferrari drivers that he wasn't bothered what any journalist wrote about him, be-

cause he had never met a journalist who knew anything about motor racing. Those same writers who had instantly begun sharpening their pens that day were among the first to offer congratulations on Sunday.

Eighty-two races into the Formula One career which his father Ed's love of cars had initially inspired, Irvine kept

things in the family as he was embraced in parc ferme by his sister Sonia, who also works for Ferrari.

"Right from Friday I was saying how good the car felt, although I couldn't understand why it was slow," Irvine said. "On Saturday again it felt good even though we weren't quick, and today it felt good, just a lit-

tle bit unstable, the way it changed direction being a bit sharp. But actually the fundamental balance was fantastic. This is the best car I have ever driven, to be sure."

Like its driver, good enough to pick up the pieces for Ferrari just as McLaren seemed poised to deliver a hammer blow to the Italian team's hopes

of a good start to its world championship campaign. Even if he never wins another race Irvine will savour this one. And so will Ed and his wife, Kathleen, who so often follow their outspoken son around the world but this time watched with pride from their home near Bangor as he finally delivered the goods in style.

South Africa fear Germans' Cup bid

SOUTH AFRICA fear Germany are likely to beat them and England in the race to host the 2006 World Cup finals unless the African countries cut their prospective candidates down from five to one.

The chairman of the South Africa World Cup bid committee, Irvin Khoza, believes Germany will definitely secure the backing of the majority of available votes in Europe. He added that South Africa are not even guaranteed the four African votes because Egypt, Ghana, Morocco and Nigeria also want to stage the finals. Africa has

FOOTBALL

never hosted the event, and the Fifa president, Sepp Blatter, believes the continent deserves a chance if it meets stringent requirements.

South Africa have also rejected a plea from the German Interior Minister, Otto Schily, to withdraw from the 2006 race in return for German support in a 2010 bid. "Europe wants to determine when they are ready and also when we are ready. They are not entitled to decide when we are ready," said the South Africa bid chief executive,

Danny Jordaan. He held talks in Nigeria and Ghana at the weekend, hoping to persuade the countries to withdraw.

Morocco, unsuccessful bidders for the 1994 and 1998 finals, are considered the biggest rival to South Africa, while England and Brazil complete the line-up seeking to host the 2006 finals. The winning bid will be announced in a year's time.

Pierluigi Casiraghi, the Chelsea £5.4m striker who injured a knee in November, does not expect to be fit for the start of next season but hopes to play again before the end of the

year. Still on crutches, he said: "I am a little bit better. I'm working hard to come back and play, but it's very difficult because the injury was very bad. Every morning and every afternoon I am working."

Referees in the Football League will abandon the innovation which saw them wearing unusual coloured shirts such as purple or yellow and revert to black kit next season.

Leeds United have been accused of "robbery" by Soccer Australia after signing teenager Jamie McMaster, whose parents emigrated

from Scotland in the late 1960s.

The Soccer Australia National Youth Coach, Les Scheinberg, said: "It's a bloody disgrace. These English clubs are like robbers, stealing our best young players, then telling them the only way they will be signed is if they turn their back on Australia and play for England, Scotland or whoever."

Rugby's 10-year advancement rule to punish dissent could be adopted by Fifa within two years after a successful pilot scheme in Jersey.

Zemun players attack referee after red card

YUGOSLAVIA

PAUL ALCOCK, the referee showed to the ground by Paolo Di Canio earlier this season, got off lightly compared to Dragan Trifunovic, who took charge of this weekend's Yugoslav First Division match between Red Star Belgrade and their city rivals, Zemun.

The match was abandoned early in the second half after Trifunovic was attacked by Zemun players. The referee had just sent off a Zemun player, Zoran Mijilovic, when he was set upon by the miscreant's team-mates.

Surrounded by Zemun players aiming punches at him, Trifunovic called off the game and ran for cover. Red Star were leading 2-1 at the time and have subsequently been awarded a 3-0 win.

The perpetrators are expected to be punished today by the Yugoslav Football Federation, which is also planning for this month's high-profile European Championship qualifier against Yugoslavia's neighbours and former war-time enemies, Croatia.



AROUND THE WORLD
EDITED BY
RUPERT METCALF

The fixture in Belgrade on 27 March will be the first football match between the two national sides since Croatia gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, although Partizan Belgrade did play Croatia Zagreb in a European Cup tie two years ago.

Away fans will be banned from both Euro 2000 qualifiers. Only a small delegation of officials and media will be travelling with the Croatian team to Belgrade.

"We decided to do everything we could to eliminate all tensions off the pitch," Branko Bulatovic, the Yugoslav Football Federation's general secretary, said.

SPAIN

JOHN TOSHACK was celebrating the first win of his second spell as Real Madrid's coach after Raul's last-minute goal earned a 3-2 success over Real Zaragoza on Sunday - but the Welshman was not so happy yesterday.

The news from the treatment room at the Bernabeu stadium was not good. The Brazilian striker Savio, who had to go off after half an hour of a thigh muscle and will be out of action for three weeks.

Savio will miss next week's second leg of the European Cup quarter-final against Dynamo Kiev. After a 1-1 draw in Madrid last week, Real have to score at least once in Ukraine if they are to progress.

Predrag Mijatovic, who scored the holders' goal against Dynamo last week, is also doubtful for the return with a knee injury. To add to Toshack's worries, the experienced defender Fernando Hierro and Manuel Sanchis both missed Sunday's game due to niggling injuries.

Amoruso wins battle with Rangers' fans

SERGIO PORRINI reckons his fellow Italian defender Lorenzo Amoruso's stunning recent form stems from his desire to prove wrong his critics among the Rangers fans. Earlier this season, whenever Amoruso opted to shoot from distance, the Ibrox faithful behind the goal would first take cover then offer the Rangers skipper a hostile verdict on his efforts.

It reached the stage in early November that Amoruso was threatening to quit the club, such was his concern, but the

Rangers manager, Dick Advocaat, ignored the advice both of his team's supporters and the media and retained Amoruso as captain.

Rangers were being held 1-1 by an impressive Falkirk in the Scottish Cup at Ibrox on Sunday when Amoruso strode forward with purpose, set his sights and let fly from fully 35 yards for a stunning winning goal.

Porcini said: "There was a time when Lorenzo took a lot of criticism and I felt very sorry for him because some of it was per-

sonal and very hurtful. He wanted to do his best for Rangers after missing much of the previous season through injury, so when he was jeered at Ibrox it was a terrible time for him."

"Lorenzo really wanted to be a success and I can tell you I know how much it means to him to be Rangers captain. He took the abuse, although it hurt, because he felt the fans were entitled to their opinion."

"In the last three months or so he has produced some magnificent performances for us

and shown people what he can do. He is a winner - and wants to win for the fans."

Amoruso has now vowed to stay, stressing "I don't think it is a problem now" when asked about a future which at last looks bright.

Rangers have now gone 15 matches unbeaten, with Sunday's victory an eighth successive win. They have already lifted the Scottish League Cup and are primed for a rare domestic treble with the prospect of Hampden Park launching its

new era with an Old Firm Scottish Cup final.

In contrast, with Hibernian having already virtually secured the First Division title, Falkirk now have little to play for, a fact which infuriates their manager Alex Totten, a firm advocate of a 16-team top flight.

Totten said: "For the sake of Scottish football that's the road we should go down, more teams in the Premier League to fall in line with the rest of Europe, where it's the norm."

SPORT

TOP TEAMS GET TOUGH P21 • HOPEFUL DAYS OF THUNDER P23

Cricket: Australia inflict sixth successive defeat as Lara's team are dismissed for a record 51
Lowest of the low for W IndiesBY TONY COZIER
in Port of Spain, TrinidadAustralia 269 & 261
West Indies 167 & 51
Australia win by 312 runs

AUSTRALIA administered yet another crushing blow to the already fractured spirit of West Indies cricket here yesterday, sweeping to victory by 312 runs in the first Test.

They brushed aside the feeble West Indies second innings in an hour and three quarters for 51, their lowest total in their long and distinguished Test history, inflicting the sixth successive defeat on their once proud, but now broken, opponents.

It was the West Indies' sixth successive loss, following the 5-0 drubbing in South Africa in the series that ended six weeks ago that undermined their re-

LOWEST WEST INDIES TEST SCORES

51 v Australia	Trinidad 1999
53 v Pakistan	Faisalabad 1986-87
76 v Pakistan	Dacca 1958-59
77 v N Zealand	Auckland 1955-56
78 v Australia	Sydney 1951-52
86 v England	The Oval 1957
89 v England	The Oval 1957
90 v Australia	Sydney 1930-31
91 v England	Edgbaston 1963
97 v England	Lord's 1933
99 v Australia	Melbourne 1930-31

solve for the powerful, uncompromising Australians, who are acknowledged as the best in the world, ahead of South Africa. It was the first Test for Australia under their new captain Steve Waugh, who has taken over from Mark Taylor.

On the same ground where the West Indies had routed England for 46 for a famous victory five years ago, the West Indies managed to hold out for only the same 19.1 meagre overs their opponents did then. Nine of the 10 wickets tumbled to the probing pace of Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie in 11.4 overs once opener Sherwin Campbell edged Gillespie for a low catch to Mark Waugh at second slip.

The previous lowest total recorded by the West Indies was 53 recorded by the West Indies against Pakistan in Faisalabad in 1986.

The frailty of the West Indies batting, and spirit, was further emphasised by their first innings collapse of the last seven wickets for 18 in 12.1 overs.



Sherwin Campbell, the West Indies' opening batsman, departs after being bowled for a duck by Australia's Jason Gillespie at Port of Spain yesterday

Allsport

Captain Brian Lara, manager Clive Lloyd and coach Malcolm Marshall, all berated by the West Indies Cricket Board for their "lack of leadership" that contributed to the South African debacle, faced the press afterwards. All insisted that there was still hope of a revival in the remaining three Tests but the assertion had a hollow ring to it. The second Test is only five days away at Sabina Park in Jamaica.

Lara, who was appointed captain for only the first two of the four Tests in the series said: "Our batting is struggling at the moment. We, as a team, need to look at that immediately and see how we can get out of it."

Lara top-scored with 62 in the first innings but fell second ball for three yesterday. Only wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs reached double figures, scoring 19, but he was responsible for

the suicidal run out of Merv Dillon. The next highest was Curtly Ambrose with six. "Getting 50s and 60s is not enough," Lara said. "I need to get 100s, especially with so many inexperienced players in the team."

Australia, 227 for 7 at the start, stretched their lead to 362 before they were all out for 261 half an hour into the day.

It took McGrath and Gillespie half-way through the eighth over before they could initiate the rout. After that, there were interrupted only by two short breaks for rain. Had it not been for four byes from a McGrath bowler that sailed over wicketkeeper Ian Healy's head and two sets of overthrows by Greg Blewett that reached the boundary, the West Indies would not have passed England's low of 46 on the same ground in 1994.

The two Australian fast bowlers matched each other wicket for wicket through the innings. After Gillespie removed Campbell, McGrath responded with a perfectly directed bouncer that Dave Joseph could only fend off his chest to first slip.

That dismissal brought Lara to the wicket. He pulled his first ball from McGrath with a confidence that brought a cheer of relief from the small crowd. The three runs took him down to the opposite end where, lunging forward, he edged the first ball of Gillespie's next ball into Mark Waugh's safe clutches at second slip.

Lara's demise triggered the first innings collapse. Suddenly the West Indies had no one to lean on.

The left-hander Jimmy Adams, a shadow of the batsman who averaged in the 70s only four years ago, was low to

McGrath on the back foot and, at the same score, the new, uncertain opener Suruj Ragoonath fell by the same route to Gillespie.

Light rain and lunch came as a temporary relief for the West Indies and, thanks to the extras, the overthrows and a couple of boundaries by Jacobs, the total mounted to 31 on resumption before Roland Holder, hindered by a sprained ankle, provided Mark Waugh with his third slip catch, off McGrath.

McGrath broke the sequence of wickets by claiming Ambrose and Jacobs with identical low decisions, of which there were 15 in the match, Dillon's run out separating them.

By now, the only noise for the usually boisterous ground was coming from the few dozen young Australians, waving their flags, singing their songs and consuming quantities of beer.

The victory was completed when fast bowler Pedro Collins swung wildly at the first ball of Gillespie's tenth over and had his off-stump plucked from behind them.

It was a fine way for Steve Waugh to begin his spell as captain following the retirement of Taylor. "I'm pretty pleased," Waugh said. He felt Australia's first innings of 269 laid the foundation for what became an easy and famous victory.

"I thought it was a great team effort but the first day really set it up for us nicely."

Yesterday had begun well for the West Indies.

Courtney Walsh took his Test match haul to 404 with the wickets of Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill, but the touring team hit back immediately, ripping through the brittle West Indies' top-order.

PORT OF SPAIN SCOREBOARD

Fourth day: Australia won the Test	
AUSTRALIA - First innings 269 (G S Blewett 58; C E L Ambrose 3-25)	
WEST INDIES - First innings 167 (B C Lara 62; D R E Joseph 50; G D McGrath 3-50; S C G MacGill 3-41)	
AUSTRALIA - Second innings 261 (Overnight 227-7)	
S K Warne 6-257, 5-257	25
J N Gillespie 6-227, 5-257	22
S C G MacGill 6-227, 5-257	22
G D McGrath 6-227, 5-257	22
Extras (b7, w1, nb1 1)	261
Total (all out, 11.4 overs)	261
West Indies 25.2-2-71-4 (nb7); Ambrose 16-4-25-2 (nb1); Collins 11-2-72-1 (nb2); Dillon 14-1-37-1 (nb1); Adams 8-1-25-2 (nb1)	
WEST INDIES - Second innings 51 (Overnight 227-7)	
S I Campbell 6-227, 5-257	0
S R Joseph 6-227, 5-257	0
B C Lara 6-227, 5-257	0
J C Adams 6-227, 5-257	0
R I C Holder 6-227, 5-257	0
C E L Ambrose 6-227, 5-257	0
P T Collins 6-227, 5-257	0
C A Marsh 6-227, 5-257	0
Extras (b7, w1, nb1 1)	0
Total (all out, 12.1 overs)	51
West Indies 12.1-0-46-6 (nb1); Farr 1-3-2-5-11; 4-16, 5-16, 6-31, 7-47, 8-47, 9-45	
Scorecard compiled by G D McGrath (Australia), J N Gillespie (West Indies), P T Collins	

Harkness set for Benfica move

STEVE HARKNESS is on his way out of Liverpool in a move to Graeme Souness's Benfica. Harkness, one of Anfield's longest-serving players, is talking to the Portuguese club about a £750,000 transfer and his move could be the first of many as manager Gerard Houllier starts to reshape his Anfield squad.

Souness met with Harkness and Liverpool at the weekend and the deal will go through once Benfica prove they have the money. Liverpool want the cash up front. Harkness will sign today once Benfica collect the money from Charlton for the sale of Martin Fringe.

Harkness could join Benfica

FOOTBALL

BY ALAN NIXON

in time to help their final push for the Portuguese title and a place in the Champions' League next season. Signed from Carlisle almost a decade ago, Harkness has seen his first-team place put in jeopardy with the arrival of Rigobert Song.

Houllier wants to raise funds and make way for fresh faces. He has £15m to spend at Liverpool plus money from the sales of players he does not want as he breaks up Roy Evans's squad. Harkness will be followed out by Oyvind Leonhardsen and Bjorn Tore

Kvarme, goalkeeper Brad Friedel, Danny Murphy and Sean Dundee. Even David James and Phil Babb will be vulnerable if Houllier finds the right replacements in his overhaul. Karl-Heinz Riedle is leaving at the end of his contract, with Liverpool lining up Dutchman Erich Meijer on a free transfer from Bayer Leverkusen as his replacement.

The Middlesbrough manager, Bryan Robson, has confirmed an interest in West Bromwich Albion striker Lee Hughes. Robson watched the 31-goal striker against Oxford on Saturday, but Hughes suffered a shoulder injury early in the game and faces a three-

week lay-off. Robson said: "We have monitored Hughes, but we have monitored a lot of other players."

The Nottingham Forest manager, Ron Atkinson, has given up his pursuit of Aston Villa's stressed-out striker Stan Collymore. It follows Collymore's decision to reject a return to the City Ground in a cash-plus-player swap deal involving Steve Stone.

Atkinson, who also tabled a £2m bid for the troubled star a few weeks ago, admitted: "I would say now that there is no chance of bringing Stan in. It looks dead in the water."

Wembley will host an FA Cup semi-final between Arse-

nal and Chelsea as Gianluca Vialli's side overcome Manchester United in tomorrow's quarter-final replay. The game would be on Monday 12 April, kicking off at 7.45pm.

Chelsea could be involved in Cup-Winners' Cup action on the previous Thursday and Wembley is unavailable on Sunday 11 April due to the Wales v England Five Nations match. The semi-final will be switched to Villa Park on the Sunday (12.30pm start) if United win the replay.

Newcastle will travel to Old Trafford to face the winners of the Barnsley v Tottenham quarter-final on Sunday 11 April (kick off 2pm or 3pm).

Bid for Wembley, page 16

Farry vows to fight dismissal

JIM FARRY was sacked yesterday from his job as the Scottish Football Association's chief executive for his negligence in processing the transfer of Jorge Cadete, which obliged the governing body to pay compensation to Celtic last week. Farry was sacked from a meeting of the SFA Council at Hampden Park, in Glasgow, at which the fate of the man who has run Scottish football for the past nine years was decided.

The move follows an independent commission ruling in

favour of Celtic last week after the Parkhead club protested at the delay in registering Cadete. The Portuguese forward missed vital matches towards the end of the 1995-96 season sparking a bitter three-year dispute. Yesterday's decision will delight Celtic's managing director, Fergus McCann, who had demanded Farry be sacked.

Farry issued a short statement, saying: "I will now be forced to seek legal advice. I can make no comment beyond that." It is understood Farry had

requested to attend the Council meeting, but received no answer.

Celtic last night released a short statement that read: "No one likes to see anyone lose their job. However, in this circumstance it was inevitable due to the substantial evidence of Mr Farry's behaviour and attitude."

The SFA president, Jack McGinn, who has temporarily taken on Farry's duties, revealed that no vote had been taken yesterday. There was a discussion about Farry's position following a recommendation

from the emergency committee last week. He said there was a procedure in place where the Council could have overturned the emergency committee's decision if there had been a two-thirds majority but there was no need to put that procedure in place this afternoon.

Farry was told on Friday evening that he had been dismissed when he received a letter from the SFA, who issued a statement saying that he had been dismissed for gross misconduct.



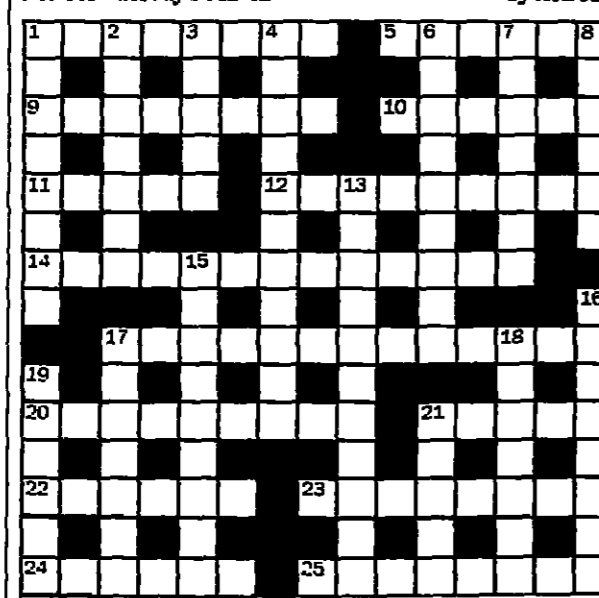
Farry: Gross misconduct

THE TUESDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3865 Tuesday 9 March

By Aisled

Monday's Solution



ACROSS

1 See terms merged in another academic session (8)

5 Go back with Heather giving nasty looks? (6)

9 Succeed in getting a woman who is very accommodating (8)

10 Feeble type adopts the French religious head-dress (6)

11 Stockpile found in house on a road (5)

12 Irish leader is a cheat, worried about nothing (9)

14 Coming to an end, crescent could be showing superiority (13)

17 William, yours truly and a third party expressing disbelief (4,2,7)

20 Continued to become

DOWN

1 Personal loathing of the false possibly (4-4)

2 State of person one's not possibly held (7)

3 Betrayed, but holding one to be sound (5)

4 Taking in heat, feverish echinoderm requires time (11)

6 Sing loads giving noted performance (9)

7 Popular stage of development to be going together (2,5)

8 Post leaves without finishing article (6)

13 Unusual building material finishes heterogeneous collection (4,3,4)

15 Toils hard on river being game (9)

16 Royal works out cost of engaging bridge player and his partner (8)

17 Can beat thin material (7)

18 Resigned sigh at report of straw house (5-2)

19 Having knowledge of gold one's in rich surroundings (2,4)

21 Second vessel becomes a drain (5)

at 11:00 1525

THE INDEPENDENT

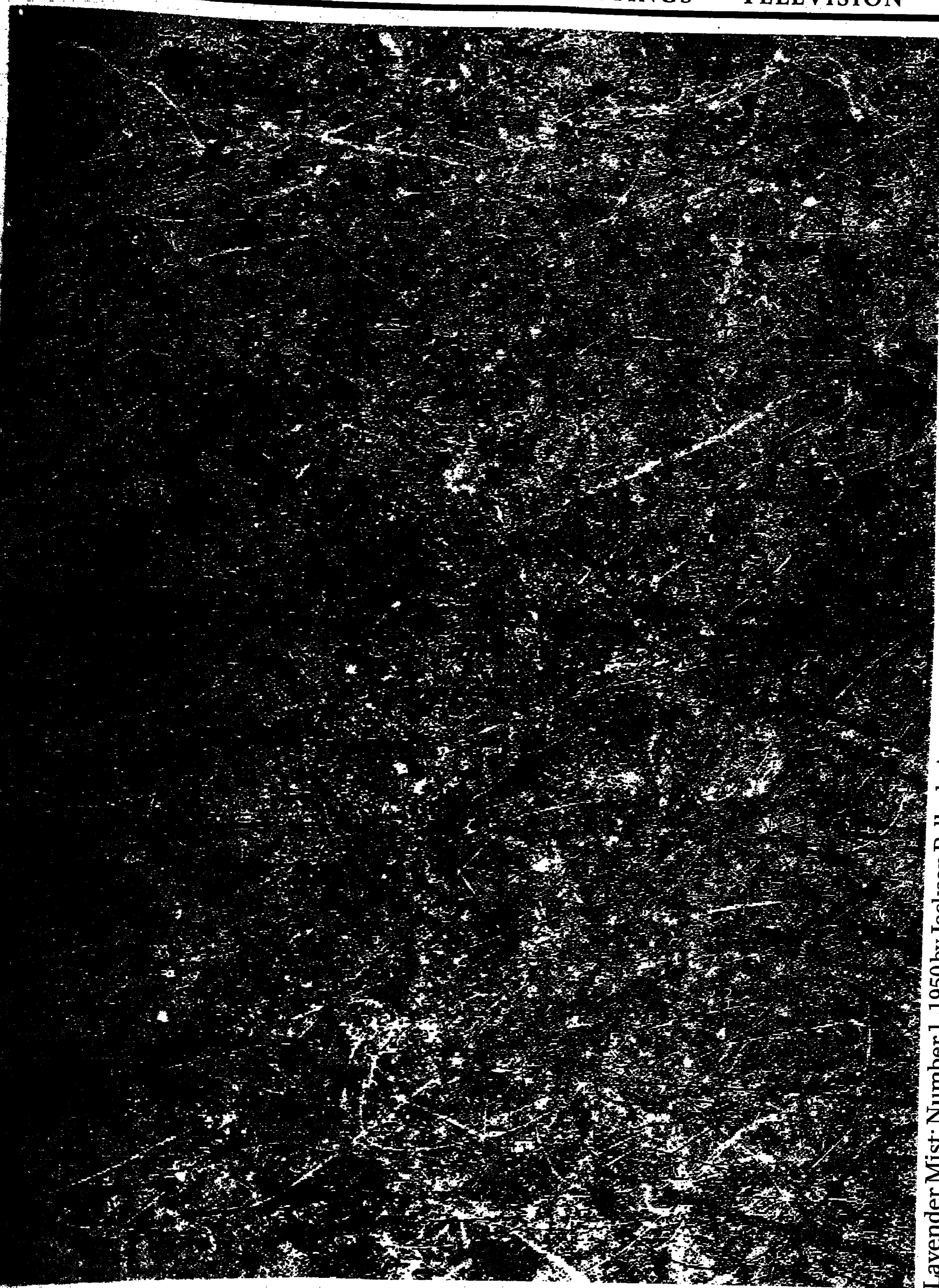
9 March 1999

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

Serena
shows
her
worth

move



Lavender Mist: Number 1, 1950 by Jackson Pollock. Apocalyptic wallpaper or the defining painting of the century? See page 10

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WITH
MEDIA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

US is a bad model

Sir: As a visiting American, I was disappointed that Tony Blair advocates an "American model" for economic progress. I hope Western Europe can learn from our mistakes, rather than imitate them.

In the early 1970s, it took one middle-class American salary to support a couple in middle-class American style. Now it takes two. It is now easier for a couple to find the necessary two (or three!) jobs than in 1992. This is certainly an improvement. But calling it an "economic boom" and being satisfied is a product of America's notoriously short memory.

One of the ways we did it to ourselves is with free trade, which is derived from a conservative notion of Utopia in which the average American makes as much as the average Mexican.

When the US is in a recession and elections are coming up, it is necessary to abandon the purity of economic doctrine and do something useful. (George Bush forgot that in 1992, and lost the election.) This limits how much damage doctrinaire economists can do - in America, Russians, Koreans, and Indonesians do not vote in American elections. Washington's economists can wreak havoc on helpless victims in foreign countries as ruthlessly as Stalin instituted collective farms.

Unlike most of Washington's victims, Western Europe has the economic strength to resist. I hope you do so.

Free trade is no longer an economic policy in America; it is a religious principle, an end in itself. I regret to say that you cannot expect America to talk sense about economics, any more than you can expect a Christian Scientist to be sensible about medical care.

Good luck in the banana war. I hope Western Europe can set its own course and find ways for technical progress to yield wealth and leisure, not unemployment.
RICHARD BRANDSHAFT
Vancouver, Washington, USA

Sir: Ken Livingstone ("The Third Way will drive Europe into a slump", 3 March) claims that the US has "relocated high-skill jobs to Mexico and other areas" and in the next paragraph that "virtually the whole global economy is subordinated to serve US needs".

Clearly this "subordination" should cease forthwith: skilled Mexicans should be returned to subsistence farming and employees of US firms in the UK returned to the dole queue.
R S MUSGRAVE
Durham

Interfere for nature

Sir: Your article about animals in danger of extinction ("Going before their time", 5 March) rightly focuses the blame on human intervention. But paradoxically the future of many threatened species depends upon our deliberate interference.

At English Nature we are concerned with not just the well-known animals at risk such as the otter, but also their "poor relations": a wide variety of obscure plants and insects which contribute to the wealth of wildlife in our country.

In the UK, one of the most important habitats is lowland heathland, 60 per cent of which has been lost since 1945. Lack of management is the biggest threat to heathland and the plants and animals which depend on it.

Direct management often involves activities not commonly associated with conservation. These include cutting down trees and controlled burning to recreate the traditional landscape, and fencing off land - not to keep people out, but to keep grazing animals in.

The English countryside cannot look after itself. The best hope for wildlife is to recognise this and for us all to do our bit in supporting local conservation activities.

BARBARA YOUNG
(Baroness Young of Old Scone)
Chairman
English Nature
Peterborough

Sir: I am a retired British citizen with no connection to the food industry apart from the pleasure of eating.

GM crops will provide the last nail in the coffin of the ecology of this sceptered isle which has been under sustained attack from the chemical companies for years. Inspired by the slogans of cheap food and larger profits we have watched wildlife rapidly disappear under attack from herbicides and pesticides and are in a fair way to producing a sterile land.

When we came to live here on the outskirts of Bromley, Kent, in 1959, bats were commonplace and owls could be heard calling at night; all have gone. The wheeling flocks of peewits in the Vale of Keston were a joy, as was the song of the skylark; all have gone. House martins, once common, have gone. We used to be awakened by a glorious dawn chorus in the summer; no more. The latest casualties are sparrows and starlings.

Politicians seem to be unaware or lack the moral fibre and guts to stand up and be counted.
L W J PHILLIPS
Bromley, Kent

Anti-racist Eltham

Sir: Your story "Lawrence Blunder: 30 Under Guard" (6 March) gave the impression that racist activity is on the increase after publication of the Lawrence report. In particular you quote Lewisham Race Equality Council as saying that "rumours were sweeping the area of further attacks by gangs from the Eltham area".

We in Greenwich (which includes Eltham) are concerned to hear that there are such rumours, especially as we have heard no evidence of such increase in racist activity.

We wonder if such rumours are proliferating because Eltham is now widely believed to be a hot-bed of racism. But 80 Eltham people (most of them white) gave information so sensitive that they

now have to be given police guard. Does that not give the lie to the statement of the police in the early days of the investigation that there was a "wall of silence"?

The effect of the Lawrence report (and of the better response of the Met in the past months) will have been to discourage racists, not to encourage them. It may also discourage them to know that so many of their own supposed "kith and kin" were prepared to assist the police with inquiries.

If people do not understand that racism happens everywhere in British society then the Lawrence family's struggle, and the Macpherson report, will have been in vain.
JAMES GORDON
Greenwich Action Committee
Against Racist Attacks
London SE18

Sir: My father did not change his name when he arrived in England in 1947. Many others in his position did: and as a child I remember the feeling that he conveyed that "name-changers" were somehow taking an easy way out.

David Aaronovitch's piece (Comment, 2 March) about low-level pernicious racism and xenophobia, as evidenced by the extent to which immigrants have

felt moved to anglicise their names, was subtle, perceptive and timely, and it squared 100 per cent with my own experience.

So I am saddened at the response of your correspondents (letters, 4, 5 March), which, together with your decision to publish, seems only to confirm David Aaronovitch's view that in this country overt racism is the tip of a much bigger and just as harmful iceberg of less conscious, ill-informed prejudice.
SEB SCHMOLLER
Sheffield

Sir: Almost all discussion of race and ethnicity is nonsense. "Every mixed race marriage is building a better Britain", 4 March).

All human beings are "mixed-race", resulting from complex combinations of the genes of all our ancestors, and all human marriages are "mixed-race", involving further combinations of combinations, all the way back to our obscure origins from notional ape-like creatures in East Africa thousands of generations ago.

The only proper answer to questions about our race or ethnic origin is "human".
ANNA FREEMAN
Leighton Buzzard,
Bedfordshire

IN BRIEF

for management of schools in Hackney, east London (report, 4 March). If private firms can run schools, does this mean that, if an industrial firm looks like becoming bankrupt, schoolteachers will be brought in to run it? Perhaps the CBI would like to comment?
MARC HURSTFIELD
Northfleet, Kent

Sir: Rather than a meaningless financial penalty for his taunts at Graeme Le Saux, the Football Association should

Dumb kids' TV

Sir: TV is a powerful educational medium. On average children spend more time in front of the box than in front of their teachers. Whereas Tom Sutcliffe points to both good and bad in television, that which is aimed at children is dismal ("The one-eyed hypnotist", 4 March).

I challenge any adult to watch any single episode of *Blue Peter* from beginning to end, and consider whether they like the idea of these presenters being a role model for their children or grandchildren. *Live and Kicking*, *Dig It* and others are so poor my challenge would be unfair.

The influence of these programmes on speech, manners and morality is probably as great as parents and teachers put together. Having watched the trivia presented to our rising generation with such empty enthusiasm, one might re-read *Brave New World* and shudder at the accuracy of Huxley's predictions.

"Dumbing down" may go out of fashion as a phrase but the phenomenon is set to continue unless the present vicious circle can be broken.

Only an independent BBC could do this, but it now seems hell-bent

on undercutting ITV in programme merit.
M A ATTEWELL
Durham

Sir: I was surprised that Andreas Whittam Smith ("It's dumb to say that culture is just plumbing the depths", 8 March) left radio out of his pantheon of cultural delights.

The BBC networks, Radio 3 and Radio 4, are a must for literate people interested in the arts, current affairs and informed opinion. There is a wealth of drama, music, comedy, literary criticism and philosophical discussion to be found there daily. And one does not have to find parking to enjoy this munificence.
JOHN O'BYRNE
Dublin

Sir: Will Wyatt makes a decent case for the BBC as a modern public service broadcaster (Podium, 3 March).

However, when he says that "Parliament" is one of the key areas of development, he clearly doesn't include the Scottish Parliament. The BBC's attitude is shown by its arrogant refusal to allow BBC Scotland to produce its own 6 o'clock television news programme containing national, British and international news. The BBC will find many Scots tuning into STV for information on their new national parliament.
DEREK YOUNG
Edinburgh

Sir: John Walsh is right to emphasise the joys of "getting" high culture ("How low can we go", 2 March). But his belief in a hierarchy of high and low culture is too entrenched. A hierarchy assumes a generalised response from the viewer, reader, listener.

Post-modernism, if it means anything, is the understanding that response is based on individual experience as well as shared assumptions. In effect every reader creates a slightly different text.
TOM DE CASTELLA
Sheffield

Ghosts of Ruthenia

Sir: I can add a sinister footnote to Timothy Garton Ash's article "Long live Ruthenia" (Weekend Review, 6 March), a country which existed for just one day in 1938, according to Alan Bullock in *Hitler, a Study in Tyranny*.

I taught in south-west Poland for three semesters and went on a trip with a class to the South-east. We emerged at a large, derelict station. The state of the rails indicated that no train had travelled beyond to the frontier with Slovakia for some years.

Walking from the train we went to the tourist house past an abandoned graveyard. The inscriptions on the elaborate wrought iron crosses were in Cyrillic and Polish. Further on was a stretch of what had been a road and on either side were mounds covered in nettles.

This was a Ruthenian village. They continued to fight for independence after the end of the Second World War. Normality (probably not the right word) was imposed by the Communists but fighting continued with the Polish Home Army, supported by London, as well as other minorities. Memorials to the Second World War would often have the year in which it ended as 1947 rather than 1945.

The authorities considered that the only solution to the problem the Ruthenians presented was to deport them to the north of Poland.

The village of Lupkow became derelict and a new one, Nowy Lupkow, was built nearby.
R L WILLOTT
Claines, Worcestershire

Britons' status

Sir: I shall be most interested to hear what is in the forthcoming White Paper on British citizenship and the dependent territories, as I believe the arrangement is likely to be non-reciprocal (report, 19 February). That is, that British citizens still in Britain will not have full right of entry into the territories.

This is probably reasonable, since most of the territories could not absorb much extra migration, but my question is concerned with that small band, of which I am a member, of Brits who already live and work in the territories, most of them for many years (17 for me) yet who still have to get entry permits and work permits every year. Will we still be forced to live "on sufferance" while our friends and neighbours have full rights to go to the UK?
A J EDWARDS
Road Town, British Virgin Islands

Weighty matters

Sir: Dr Anthony Egan's letter (3 March) suggests that astronauts are "weightless". If they were they would travel away from the earth in a straight line. It is their weight (somewhat less than their weight at the earth's surface) which provides the centripetal force which keeps them travelling in a circular orbit around the earth. Their spacecraft is behaving in the same way, so in relation to the spacecraft they appear weightless.

His idea that mass is "how much stuff there is" is not wholly incorrect but I think that Newton would have preferred the idea of mass being a measure of the resistance of an object to having its motion changed. Which is why Brussels's use of the word mass is appropriate in the context of bringing a trailer or caravan to a stop in a safe distance.
SEB MOORE
Little Walsingham, Norfolk

Cheesed off

Sir: I take great exception to the suggestion (Deborah Ross, 8 March) that I have a picnic hamper at Arsenal games and cry "A nice bit of Brie anyone?" Dolcetto or a pleasing Wensleydale perhaps, but never Brie.

PIERS MORGAN
(Educated at Chislehurst and Levens Priory comprehensive schools, East Sussex)
Editor
"The Mirror"
London E14

When Dr Cunningham threatened to hang Prince Charles

IT'S TIME for another helping of *The History of King Tony* or *New Labour's Lost*, the Shakespearean comic-tragic-history of King Tony's efforts to get his country into Europe, or at least into the next century. In the last extract, King Tony lost so of his bravest knights, Sir Peter Mandelson and Sir Geoffrey Robinson. Now what new woes will beset our brave monarch?

The scene is the king's counsel chamber, where his advisers, spin doctors, soothsayers, astrologers, Catholic spies, etc, await him. Enter the King, followed closely by Lord "Doctor" Jack Cunningham. They stand apart and converse.

King Tony: How goes the world with thee, Lord High Enforcer?

Is all at peace and quiet in my realm?

Jack: My liege, your countrymen are well content, except in Scotland, Wales and Eltham, Kent.

Tony: The Scottish and the Welsh are always trouble.

But what can ail suburban, Kentish Eltham. Near where the A2 sweeps its lordly way

Down to the ancient town of Dover, where A tunnel, dug so cunningly 'neath the ocean. Does take our British shoppers 'cross to France Where they may buy their groceries far more cheap Than they can get them in a British shop...

Does that explain the grievances in Eltham?

Jack: In part, my Lord; but chief among their woes Is the unpunished killing of a black boy there By young white thugs who still walk free today.

Tony: Then they must hang! Go, fetch the constable!

Jack: Oh, that it were quite so easy as all that! Alas, the constable himself is also suspect.

Tony: Of killing the hapless youngster; do you mean?

Then send for men to bring the constable in And I shall have him hanged before nightfall!

Jack: No, sire. That will not help. The constable Is not exactly guilty. But his chief, Sir Paul, Is thought to know much more than he lets on.

Tony: Then bring Sir Paul, this rascal, here to me. And we shall string him from the nearest tree!

Jack: No, sire. That will not do. We must proceed More gently. Bloody deeds may cleanse your soul But injure you in an opinion poll.



MILES KINGSTON

I seethe! I burn! Base Michael and vile Charles Shall feel the fiery edge of my just wrath!

Tony: How right you are, Lord "Doctor" Cunningham! From rash reactions you are there to save me!

But soft - who comes here splashed with mud. As one who rides non-stop for days and days? Enter a breathless messenger.

Messenger: King Antony, I ride hotfoot from Wales. To bring you news of freshly brewing trouble!

Tony: How can this be? I thought I'd sorted out The voting for the new Welsh parliament!

Saw you not the way I stitched up Rhodri Morgan And engineered into the seat of power Duke Allan Michael, boring but so loyal?

Jack: I did, my liege, and well you did it too. Messenger: And yet this same Duke Michael will incur Your wrath for what he's done this day in Wales. Together with Prince Charles, the Old Pretender, He has combined to eat a plate of meat!

Tony: Can such a deed be called so very wrong? Messenger: The meat they ate was beef, still on the bone!

Tony: Come now, my good Lord "Doctor", come! Just now you urged me not hang Paul Condon. And now I beg you to be calm and sweet.

To hang Duke Allan Michael is not meet. The folk of Wales might take the thing awry If their new leader was hung out to dry.

Jack: You may be right. I should just simmer down. Tony: And now it's time to fetch Duke Gordon.

Brown! Jack: You aim to hang your trusty Chancellor? Tony: No, no! Well, not quite yet, at least, for now. No, this is the time when he compiles his Budget. That moment when he tells the folk of England How he will take more money from their purse. He loves this moment, when he strides the stage And seem to be the expert of the age!

And so I love to put my ear in too And tell Duke Gordon Brown just what to do. Jack: Which drives him mad?

Tony: Which sends him round the bend! And that of course is just what I intend!

More of this intriguing saga tomorrow!

THE INDEPENDENT

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Walkers all over the country can celebrate a victory

THE PRIME Minister spent the last years of Labour's Opposition promising more access to the countryside: indeed, he specifically promised a statutory "right to roam" over heath, down and moorland. Mr Blair's promise would have made for painful reading this morning, had the rumours that the Government was considering only local voluntary agreements been confirmed. In fact, the plans announced yesterday by the environment minister, Michael Meacher, at least promise the fulfilment of Mr Blair's pledge. Walkers and rambles all over the country - including those in the Cabinet - should celebrate.

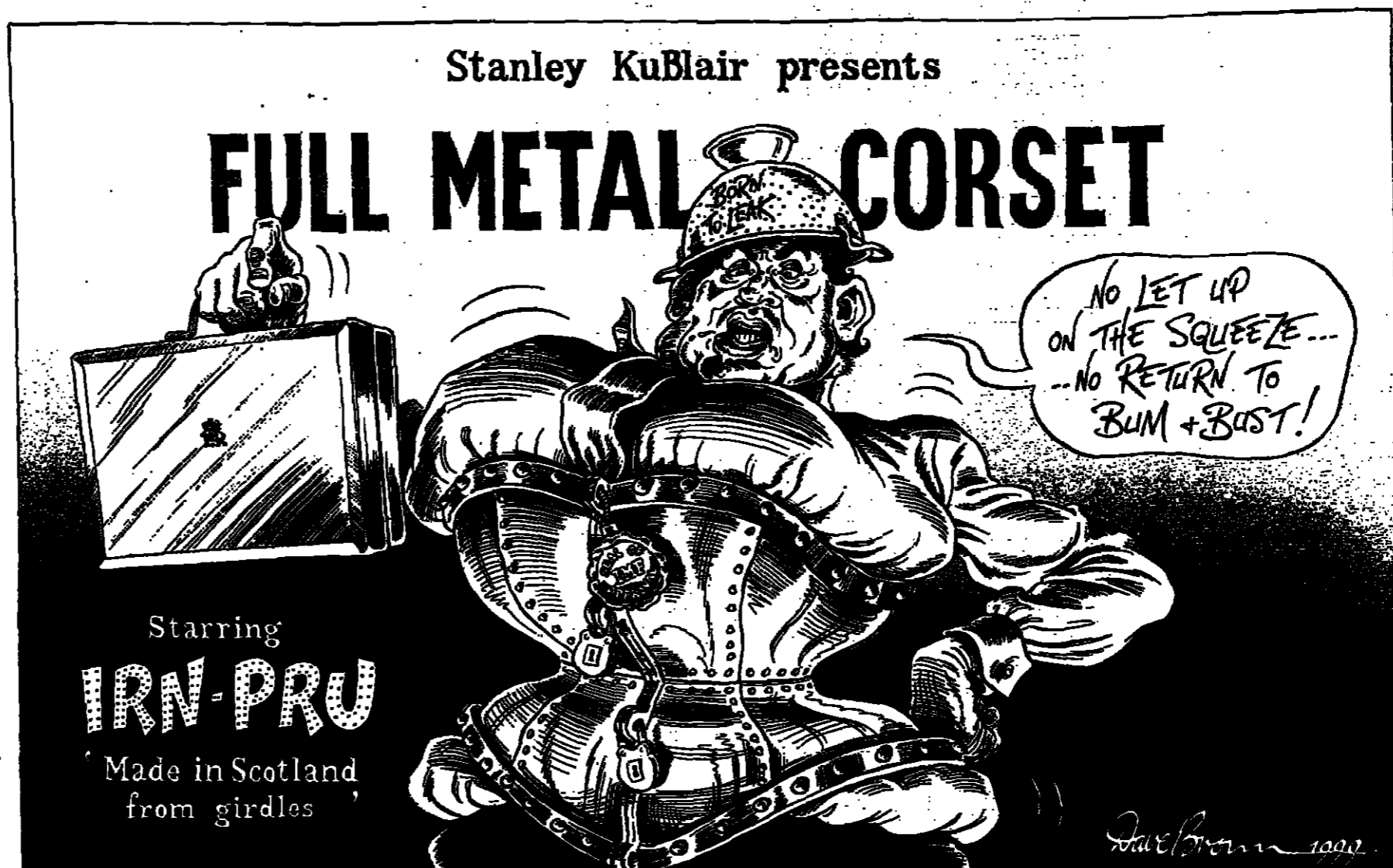
One of New Labour's most strongly worded pledges in opposition was the promise to create a legally enforceable "right to roam" over uncultivated land; but the vague reference to more "access" in Labour's 1997 election manifesto seemed to be a worrying indication of retreats to come on this issue.

We now know that those fears were exaggerated. A Countryside Agency will oversee local agreements between landowners and rambles; the role of local forums will be purely to advise. There will be a statutory right to roam, which will usually take precedence over restrictions necessary to safeguard the environmental worth of special sites, and to protect farmers from the damage done by walkers trampling over their crops.

Local agreements may do little to open up new areas. Responsible landowners and farmers will co-operate, and continue to provide well-marked footpaths and tracks on their land. Bullies such as Nicholas Van Hoogstraten - the target of Ramblers Association protests at the 9-ft-high fence he has constructed across a public right of way in East Sussex - will probably go on obstructing and frustrating the legitimate claims of walkers.

The vital element in Mr Meacher's announcement is that such obstruction will not be tolerated: there will be no private vetoes for anyone. Arbitration between conflicting demands, now to be placed in the hands of Ewen Cameron as the new head of the Countryside Agency, will be vital in deciding which side prevails in deadlocks such as that on Mr Van Hoogstraten's land. Mr Cameron is a former head of the Country Landowners' Association, and has in the past publicly opposed a right to roam. Now he is said to be enthusiastically behind the Government's reforms. He will have to prove that his conversion is real.

New Labour has compromised on other "countryside" issues such as fox-hunting and farm subsidies, and has spared the voting rights of some hereditary peers sitting in the House of Lords. Now it appears to have realised the political harm these compromises were causing. Opinion polls show the public to be overwhelmingly in favour of the type of access that yesterday's plans



promise. One of the first acts of the Scottish Parliament - probably headed by a Labour first minister - later in the year will be to inaugurate a right to roam, fitting recognition of that country's long tradition of a more open countryside. The Parliamentary Labour Party was keen on Gordon Prentice's Private Member's Bill that has forced the Government's hand: Mr Blair could not afford to divide his party, as well as alienate the wider public, in his efforts to appease Middle England.

Landowners and the Conservatives, who yesterday in the Commons appeared to act almost as their mouthpiece, should realise that access to uncultivated land can no longer be denied. The local forums that will try to reach agreement between landowners and the public will be their last chance to show that they can act responsibly. Public and Government will be watching them; if they attempt to stand in the way of access, they will be overruled. The Government's radicalism is a welcome renewal of its radical mandate, won in opposition to such vested interests.

The Commonwealth can help the Caribbean

COMMONWEALTH DAY passed off yesterday with few celebrations. The attendance of parliamentary leaders at Westminster Abbey, and the Queen's Message emphasising the role of sporting links, passed without much impact on public consciousness. This is a depressing state of affairs, for we still have economic, political and judicial links with our old Empire which cannot be forgotten. The Caribbean, in the headlines owing to the "banana wars" with the US, is a good example. The legacy of our rule there is that too many countries are locked in inter-island strife, small economies unable to support specialisation and exposed to economic shocks such as the banana conflict.

Nor is our responsibility limited to a historic legacy. Prisoners in many of Britain's ex-colonies can still appeal to

the Privy Council in London. Hundreds of people have successfully appealed against their death sentences in this way. The signs are that Caribbean governments will not stand for this much longer, as they prepare to institute their own Caribbean Supreme Court.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the death penalty, the Caribbean's sovereign nations have a right to decide their own laws without British pressure - recently extended to urging more liberal laws on homosexuality. The inter-island co-operation inherent in a new Supreme Court can only be a good thing, especially if extended to economics. That should allow these countries to end clashes between European Union aid policy, administered through the Lomé Convention, and separate bilateral national agreements that serve only to divide and confuse aid efforts.

More should have been done of Commonwealth Day, revealing our duty to make amends for past exploitation, and encourage economic development and co-operation among those we once presumed to rule.

How I learnt to hate the landowner and love the rambler

ALMOST EXACTLY 500 years ago, at Wormleighton on the border between Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, a court official, William Cope, had his manor enclosed. As a consequence 12 farms and three cottages were pulled down and their 60 or so inhabitants evicted. Eight years later Cope sold up to a John Spencer, who built himself a manor-house there. Unfortunately for Spencer there were rules against depopulating the countryside, and he found himself up before the beak for the acts committed by Cope. Spencer was ordered to pull down his hedges, fill in his ditches and restore the land to farming.

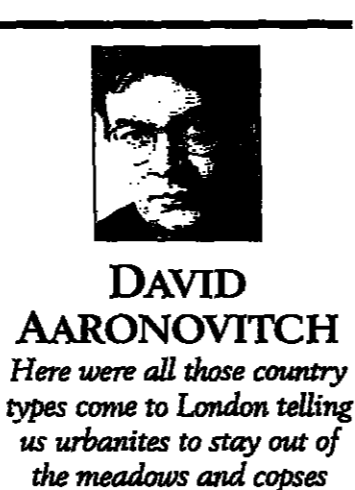
This brought forth a great wall of protest. As recorded by WG Hoskins, in *The Making of the English Landscape*, Spencer argued that he had done great works on his land. He had maintained the parish church (vestments, chalice, the lot), built four houses for retainers, bred and fed more cattle than before, and sown acorns for trees. Furthermore, he lamented, were he to be forced to restore the land, "it should be his utter undoing" economically. Nevertheless, Spencer lost his case and down came the enclosing hedges. It was not, however, as history records, quite his "utter undoing"; the Spencers of Althorp have long had a bob or two.

Each of Spencer's arguments seems eerily familiar to anyone who has been listening to the Country Landowners' Association (CLA) and the countryside lobby since the last election. The promise of the Bill to increase public access to private land (published yesterday) led to a perfect

compendium of ingenious objections to any presumption of a right to roam. Rare red kites will no longer fly over carefully husbanded land, tamed and watched over by loving rural custodians. Instead, an ignorant (if good-natured) townie army of picnickers and Rothweller owners would scare the birds, pick the flowers, scatter litter and destroy the fragile economy of the countryside. No, access by the public to private areas should be a matter of voluntary agreement, sensitive to local needs and inexpensive to enforce.

In a lazy way I had, for a long time, bought most of this argument. When I was young, and used to camp a lot, we were taught always to seek pitching permission from the landowner, and to be pathetically grateful if he or she permitted the corner of a far-flung field to be occupied for a night or two. And, to be fair, permission was usually granted, and often with good grace. But I had no real concept of exercising a "right". All the rights were on the side of those who owned the land; we were there on sufferance.

Furthermore, I like the word "voluntary". It is the opposite of "compulsory", and would seem more liberal. Indeed, the "letter than thou" Lib Dem leadership candidate Charles Kennedy recently argued that a right to roam would be a legal minefield, and that any move to increase access should depend upon "consultation, co-operation and compromise, and a positive attitude by landowners and managers". All those warm "co-" words appeal, especially when contrasted with the apparent im-



possibility of the Ramblers Association, New Age travellers and the Byronic Dr George Monbiot.

But I've changed my mind. Paradoxically it was the Countryside Alliance's great marches to London that started me thinking that perhaps old Monbiot et al might be right. Here were all those country types come to London, telling us that we urbanites should stay out of the meadows and copses because they alone understood how to manage the land, and we would only wreck things. All of a sudden I wondered whether this were true. Like others I began to examine the record, to ask questions.

For instance, if it was the case, as the CLA claimed, that their members wanted to see greater public access to their land, why hadn't they already seen to it that this was granted? And

even now, when legislation was approaching noisily, like a distant steam train, why was their own voluntary scheme, the "Permitted Access" register, so utterly pathetic? I looked up the access for walkers in Shropshire. In the whole county, there were 20 schemes listed.

The conclusion to be drawn from this (and the Government has drawn it) is that landowners do not want the public on their land. And that they will invent any number of plausible-sounding reasons as to why the public needs to stay away, or should be allowed in only under the most restrictive circumstances. Yet there is no evidence whatsoever (I mean none) that properly regulated public access damages rural business, the environment, the survival of the red kite or anything else. Indeed the opposite appears to be the case. Oh, and as you might expect, in Scandinavia rights to roam exist without creating "legal minefields" or proving to be anybody's "utter undoing".

So why not here? I blame it on the monarchy. The Archers, the National Trust and the English desire for all paradises to be exclusive. Together these have produced in us a self psychology, whereby we have acceded to the idea of owning land from which we may be excluded, in the hope that we too may one day exclude others. We think it both natural and culturally desirable that rich people should have large estates (call it "heritage"), whose enjoyment is predicated on keeping the riff-raff out. We have been taught by Phil, Jill, Dan, Doris and David that outsiders on your

land equals poaching, open gates, dead sheep and loss of profit. And yet, until 300 years ago our forebears walked more or less wherever they wanted. Paths marked the most convenient ways to travel, not as today - the only permitted ways. Land ownership conveyed the right to profit from land, not the right to exclude all others from it. And then we allowed all this to disappear, and - for the best part of two centuries - the rights of landowners increased at the expense of all the other subjects of the Crown. Forests were enclosed or destroyed, common land was seized, rights of way were barred and the right to hunt wild animals was aggrandised by the few.

This continues today. Oliver Rackham, in *The History of the Countryside*, remarks on the practice of purpostructure, or annexation by stealth. It "begins with a householder mowing the verge outside his garden, continues with boulders placed to prevent people driving on the verge, and ends with the ditch filled in and the verge absorbed into the garden". Some of what landowners hold, they have no right to: it was simply that - at the time - no one had the time or money to contest their actions.

Yesterday all that ended. The Bill announced by Michael Meacher is the first substantial attempt in several centuries to try to redress an imbalance that has been made, falsely, to seem natural. It represents a break with our self psychology, our forelock-tugging deference, our elevation of property rights over human rights. And never mind the Spencers.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"He did his own thing but he was a great ball-player, that's all I know."

Yogi Berra,

on his Yankees team-mate Joe DiMaggio

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer is entrusted with a certain amount of misery which it is his duty to distribute as fairly as he can."

Robert Lowe,

Chancellor of the Exchequer 1868-73

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World press comment on the current trade war between the US and Europe

hurricane-hit Honduras by America's Chiqualta or from former European colonies in the Caribbean by Ireland's Fyites. But the WTO's dispute settlement procedures also need urgent overhaul to stop such rows from festering in future. And America and Europe must grasp the desirability of abiding by WTO judgments. The WTO, like any

international organisation, ultimately relies on consent. It can work only if all its members, particularly the biggest ones, agree to act in good faith. The Economist, UK

EUROPE is trying to tilt its market in favor of local banana importers, aircraft manufacturers and beef farmers and ward off cheaper US competition. Since open protectionism is no longer respectable, Europe cloaks its efforts with arguments about

pollution, beef hormones and the devastation that free trade in bananas would produce in former Caribbean colonies. While not entirely without merit, these arguments disguise the real motives of European governments - and impede reasonable solutions. A transatlantic trade war is in nobody's interest. Further frictions are likely as the US and Europe adjust their relationship to new circumstances. The New York Times, US

PRESIDENT CLINTON is wrong. He says the trade dispute between his country, the United States, and the European Community is not really about bananas. In his view it is about the rules governing the world trading system. But the President, from his position as head of the government of a state that does not grow bananas for export, keeps looking at the issue through vision impaired by myopia. He does not understand that the banana

issue is more than about rules. It is about people. The penalties facing the people of the Caribbean Community if Clinton has his way would be horrendous. Community representatives in Washington should let the American Government be aware of this prospect. Trinidad Guardian

THE EU should start treating banana imports equally, whether they are shipped from

PANDORA

STEVE LEWIS-HAMILTON, the subject of a Carlton World documentary next month, is Pandora's kinda dude. Winners focuses on the former meat-market porter's current gig as a professional gambler. He has racked up \$50,000 a year in the last decade - and being a sporting guy, generously agreed to share his top tips. Lewis-Hamilton's nap is Deano's Beano (currently 4-1 for Cheltenham's Stayers' Hurdle on 18 March) "and the nag will take some beating". French Holly, in the Champion Hurdle two days before, is a good each-way shot at 7-4, he says, even at 7-1 to win. "Especially if anything happens to the favourite, Istabraq". For the Grand National, Lewis-Hamilton likes Double Thriller: "It's got a big chance at 8-1; it's well handicapped." The man also suggests Arsenal as good value for the Premiership at 7-2; Man Utd have two tough games coming up and Chelsea "don't have the staying distance. Arsenal's run-in doesn't look too tough and Man Utd have Euro commitments." Of course, investment values may go down as well as up...

... AS NO ONE knows better than the curiously tattooed newspaper heir Lachlan Murdoch. According to Maggie Alderson's piece in next month's *Tatler*, the thrustingly good-looking millionaire Aussie media scion proposed to the lingerie model Sarah O'Hare (below) the night before the Melbourne Cup. She accepted, and as the love-struck couple posed at the racecourse for the paparazzi, they noticed that a horse called Tie the Knot was among the big race runners. Did it win? As if. Pandora trusts this is not an omen.

NOW THAT Stanley Kubrick has rolled his final credits, it seems timely to mention that his masterpiece, *A Clockwork Orange*, a film he personally watched after its initial release, is legally available on video. Kubrick's should Eurostar it over to Paris and, unless you're lucky enough to have a Secam converter, watch it in black and white - but without dubbing or irritating subtitles. Well worth buying popcorn for.

THE US government has urged research labs to pioneer more

sophisticated systems" to protect Salt Lake City's 2002 Winter Olympics from rogue chemical and biological agents. Detectors currently fill a laboratory-sized room; the aim is to miniaturise them into handheld units for cops and firefighters. Very laudable, but shouldn't the technology be used to detect rogue chemical and biological agents in some of the competitors?

MARTIN BELL may have faced snipers in Bosnia and Christine Hamilton on Knutsford Heath, but the white-suited one's sternest test has materialised from an unexpected quarter. The graphologist Alan Conway amazed listeners to Spectrum, a battling radio station in the South-east, with his candid character analysis of Parliament's only Independent MP Conway says Bell's writing suggests he's arrogant, dogmatic and prone to low self-esteem. Bell diplomatically agreed with most of the analysis, but took exception to "arrogant". "I don't think I'm arrogant. I don't go round attacking other parties." Strike arrogant, insert naïve?

CARS SLOWED to a crawl on Chelsea's Royal Avenue this week as drivers rubber-necked a palatial white house whose windows were filled with glitterati as the walls shook from rock'n'roll. It was Richard and Ruth Rogers' incendiary thrash to celebrate the 10-year rapture of Nigella Lawson (media goddess and best-selling cookery author) and the broadcaster and writer John Diamond. Their friends, an eclectic bunch that includes Alastair Campbell, Ruby Wax, Ian Hislop, Harold Pinter and both Mrs Martin Amises watched spellbound as Diamond, who's had throat surgery, used an overhead projector to write his speech on Lord Rogers' vast living-room wall - the shadow of his hand moving biblically across the plaster. At Diamond's request, dancing erupted: the highlight of the evening was Home Secretary Jack "Have-A-Go" Straw cutting a rug with Lady Rogers (of River Café fame) to the strains of The Cars' "My Best Friend's Girl". Jack the Biscuit - he can frisk it.

Contact Pandora by e-mail on pandora@independent.co.uk

An orgy of sanctimonious celebs



TERENCE BLACKER

It's unsettling to find alternative comedians cooing at one another from Celebrityland

are distributing "Brush Up with Colgate for Comic Relief" leaflets. Then there's a Body Shop Kissing Kit, a red nose Parker pen, while Pritt Stick are sponsoring a card design kit for kiddies to make their own Mother's Day cards. The giving just goes on and on.

It goes without saying that the People's Party are in the vanguard of celebrity carers. Gordon Brown,

the gentle Chancellor, has already posed for a Comic Relief photo-opportunity and it would be no surprise to see him present the Budget wearing a red nose of caring.

No one could deny that this great charity event is doing excellent work for those who participate. Comedians, politicians and soap opera actors can boost their often flagging careers with a public display of those two essential attributes for the modern celebrity: a social conscience and a sense of humour. Large businesses, many of whom have a less than spotless record of philanthropy, can flag their products with the help of publicity from a compliant press. The BBC can fill up programme space with embarrassingly feeble material. It also, importantly and undeniably, provides a massive boost for worthwhile charities - £138m over the past 14 years.

But is there not something creepily sentimental and self-indulgent about this great annual orgy of public, institutionalised giving? Night after night, we are subjected to show-us-you-care bullying from comedians, the very people who

should stand back from the herd and distrust the Diana effect. How unsettling it is to find yesterday's alternative comedians trilling and cooing at one another from the heart of Celebrityland.

First giving becomes part of show business; soon it becomes all show, complete with well-lit documentary film and a backing track from Robbie Williams. Ever since Billy Connolly blubbed in front of the Live Aid cameras, having watched a film of starving Africans to the sweet but utterly irrelevant strains of a number by The Cars, the connection between gloopy pop songs and real suffering has become acceptable. Today, even grown-ups like Richard Curtis can, without a second thought, introduce a Desert Island favourite by the country chanteuse Iris Dement with some well-meaning, lachrymose thoughts about Third World suffering.

It is as if Hollywood effects must be deployed to remind us how to feel, as if we endlessly need to be reassured of how generous and giving and kind we have all become. "You are a truly amazing bunch of people," Lenny Henry tells us in thanks

for raising "a largiferous £27m" last year. But are we that amazing really? Take a look at the endless TV documentaries that record and bathe upon the various types of selfishness, cruelty, vanity and betrayal at the heart of modern society. Consider the behaviour of tabloid journalists, mocking and persecuting the celebrity victim of the moment on behalf of readers who have become suffering junkies, hooked on human pain. See the behaviour of hosts, guests and audiences on daytime TV shows: they cry - trying to obligate - but does the crushing, all-exclusive obsession with self honestly represent a more caring society than that of 10, 20 or 30 years ago?

Of course, we should give. We should try to ignore such ghastly stunts as Ruby Wax pretending to be a soufflé in a sketch with Gary Rhodes; close our ears to the smooth, sincere tones of Stephen Fry; and indulge the zany antics of lovable Lenny. But perhaps it's time to stop wearing our hearts on our sleeves, our red noses on our faces, quite so snugly. Because deep down, we all know that this week's show biz thing.

The unbearable arrogance of the world's only superpower



GAVIN ESLER

Clinton babbles that Europe must 'play by the rules' while insisting only American rules count

men might take to the drug trade as a way of making a living. Privately, this has been a worry for months among British diplomats. One very senior British diplomat says the banana row is the most bitter dispute he can recall between London and Washington - as bad as the 1983 disagreement over the US invasion of Grenada - and that the Americans just won't listen to reason.

Yet immediately following the statements by the St Lucia Prime Minister, I interviewed a spokesman from the US Trade Representative's office in Washington which is at the centre of the dispute. He quickly brushed off the concerns of the Caribbean banana producers, in effect suggesting that the United States knows better about the economic interests of the region than the people who actually live there. This is as patronising as the British in the days of the Raj, and - again like the British a century ago - American insensitivity to foreign opinion stretches far deeper.

Last week saw the acquittal on manslaughter charges of US Marine

pilot Captain Richard Ashby. He flew a military aircraft into the cable which held up a gondola above the Italian ski resort of Cavalese a year ago, killing 20 people. Ashby was supposed to be flying at a top speed of 517 mph and an altitude of 2000 feet. He hit the cable at 621 mph and was just 370 feet above the valley floor, yet a US military jury found him not guilty. "If those accused are not guilty," the Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema complained, "then we would like to know who is."

The Mayor of Cavalese, Mauro Gilmozzi, called the verdict "a profound injustice, an affront to common sense and an insult to the families of those who died". The Italians wanted to try Captain Ashby themselves, but the Pentagon cited NATO treaty provisions and flew him back to North Carolina. It is, frankly, inconceivable that if an Italian pilot killed 20 American citizens in Aspen or Vail, he would escape punishment. If America is so reluctant to see its soldiers tried abroad, even in a friendly NATO country, you can imagine the virtual impossibility of the United States ever signing up to any international human rights regime which could lead to soldiers facing charges for their actions during combat.

But if irritating Britain and Italy in the past few days is not enough, it was also Germany's turn to feel scorned. The state of Arizona gassed to death a German-born convicted murderer Walter LaGrand despite strong protests from Germany's justice minister. She criticised the United States for ignoring international treaties and called the execution barbaric.

Now our imperial pretensions are long gone, the British can joke about 19th-century arrogance, the "white man's burden", and British newspaper reports of fog in the



Captain Ashby: not guilty of cable-car deaths Randy Davey

Channel ensuring that the Continent is cut off. But at the end of the 20th century, the United States displays all the imperial and insular insensitivity of Palmerston's Britain.

Last year, at crucial stages in the Lewinsky affair, Bill Clinton invented his own gunboat diplomacy. He ordered Cruise missile strikes against a terrorist base in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan. Washington has never produced any credible evidence that the Sudanese factory was making chemical weapons, but the US government has not apologised for blowing it to pieces.

In a one-superpower world, there is no way of holding the Clinton administration to account, nor is there much of an outcry in the media about America acting tough in faraway countries full of troublesome foreigners. We have almost daily bombings of Iraq, with Britain tagging along as a partner. At least 17 Iraqi civilians have been killed and, to the annoyance of Turkey, the main oil pipeline from Iraq has been destroyed. In taking on Saddam, as

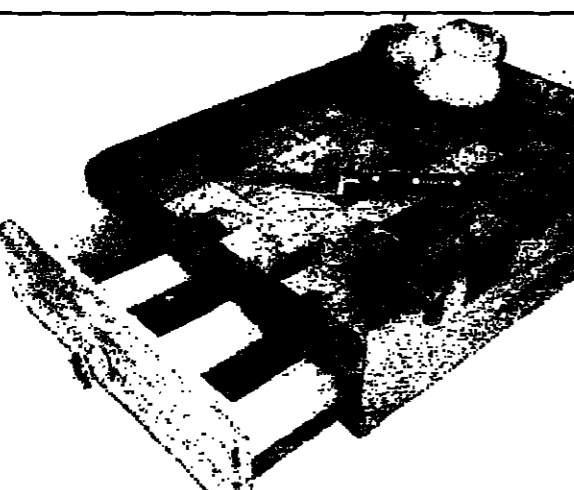
so often this century, the United States is firmly on the side of Good against Evil, though the policy towards Iraq is arguably as flawed as the policy which has kept Fidel Castro in power in Cuba for 40 years. But if it is in British interests to lend a hand against the Iraqi tyrant, we still have cause to worry.

Our role looks to many Arabs as if we are merely giving a multi-lateral gloss to what is effectively an American show. The greatest superpower in the history of the world is not always right. When it is wrong, it rarely admits it. And when it is right, the perceived arrogance of unchecked American power might yet prove unbearable. With the confidence of a sleepwalker, the Clinton administration seems to regard foreigners in much the same way as Ronald Reagan did after a visit to Latin America in 1982.

"You'd be surprised," Reagan said. "They're all individual countries." You'd be surprised. Gavin Esler is a presenter on BBC News 24 and author of *The United States of Anger*

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How reliable is animal testing?



PODIUM

C RAY GREEK
From a speech by the organ transplant expert to the Doctors for Responsible Medicine Conference in London

TAKING MEDICATION is a daily routine for many. Lives are routinely saved by medicines such as antibiotics, vaccines, and chemotherapeutic agents. Drugs such as painkillers and anaesthetics daily improve the lives of millions more.

Before being marketed, these miracle drugs are tested first on animals, and then in clinical trials on human volunteers. The animal tests are intended to evaluate new medications for toxicity, carcinogenicity, teratogenicity, side-effects and sometimes, efficacy. Human trials are then undertaken to verify that the animal tests have accurately predicted the effects and side-effects of the new drugs on humans. Human clinical trials take place in many forms.

Humans who are very sick can be given an untried medication that may help them. This occurs in patients with potentially fatal diseases such as cancer or AIDS. If the patient is likely to die from their disease, then they are thought to have nothing to lose and potentially much to gain from trying the new drug. Co-ordinators of

human trials can also ask for volunteers, to take the medication and then undergo blood tests and report side-effects. The humans volunteering for clinical trials are assured that the risk they are taking is minimal. After all, the drugs have already passed animal trials.

Does animal experimentation really contribute to the safety of those volunteering to test new medicines? How reliable is animal testing in terms of human safety? Let's look at the example of Thalidomide.

Thalidomide may be the best-known medication that harmed humans even after extensive animal testing. Like all drugs, it was tested on animals prior to being released. However, not until phocomelia had been recognised in babies whose mothers had taken the drug, did it undergo extensive animal tests for teratogenesis.

The researchers working with Thalidomide had done experiments on rats, but had not produced the characteristic limb abnormalities seen in humans. After clinicians warned that they suspected Thalidomide of causing this devastating birth defect in children, researchers raced back

to the lab to see if their clinical brethren were correct.

Despite testing Thalidomide on scores of species, breeds, and strains of animals, phocomelia was infrequently seen. Testing on more than 50 types of animals did not consistently produce the side-effects that crippled thousands of children. There is no way to know whether the rabbit, the beagle or the chimp will respond as does man, until one knows

how man responds. By then, the horse is well out of the barn.

Animal testing of new medications is not predictive. There is little value in confirming that a negative outcome occurs in certain other species after babies have been crippled or humans have died. The dead and crippled are unlikely to be comforted by the fact that they react as New Zealand white rabbits do but differently from guinea-pigs! There is no single animal that makes a good bellwether. An animal that responds like humans to one medication will not necessarily respond the same way to another medication.

How well the animal test predicts outcomes in humans depends on the animal species picked. However, you don't know which one to pick until after you know what the medication does to humans.

In America, the Food and Drug Administration is charged with assuring that medications released to the public are safe. It oversees clinical trials after the medications have been tested on animals. Certainly, they would not depend on animal tests unless they had great confidence

in them. One high-ranking FDA official stated: "Most of the animal tests we accept have never been validated. They evolved over the past 20 years and the FDA is comfortable with them."

Animal testing of new medicines has delayed the marketing of life-saving medications like penicillin, for years. It has the potential to prevent others from ever making it to patients who need them. It has also resulted in human beings being harmed by unsafe medications that had received a clean bill of safety in animal tests. Humans participating in clinical trials are at risk because of the false sense of security perpetuated by those who profit from the release of new medications. This includes pharmaceutical companies, pharmaceutical sales people, animal experimenters, and those who sell supplies and animals for that process.

The informed consent given to those participating in clinical trials should clearly state that the testing of new medications on animals offers no safety for the humans undergoing clinical trials.

Stand and deliver, Mr Brown



HAMISH MCRAE

Test what Mr Brown says against Lara Croft: does he make it more likely Britons take risks?

JEAN-BAPTISTE Colbert, Louis XIV's famed minister of finance, said: "the art of taxation consists of so plucking the goose as to obtain the largest amount of feathers with the least amount of hissing."

Gordon Brown has proved himself to be a skilled plucker. So successful, in fact, that he will announce today that the budget is in surplus. Thanks in part to the strong economic growth but also thanks to his ability to nudge up taxation without us noticing too much, he will be able not only to unveil the surplus but also cut some taxes and announce some new initiatives to promote faster growth. Oh yes, and there will be some new, albeit modest, spending proposals too.

A lot of feathers, muted hissing - is it all to good to be true? Any-one who doubts the way in which the public verdict of a Chancellor can change should remember the fate of the last Chancellor to announce a surplus, Nigel Lawson. At the time he was the great hero of the government, now fairly or unfairly, he is regarded as the perpetrator of the "Lawson boom", and the subsequent recession. Listening to Gordon Brown today we will hear similar triumphalism. How do we distinguish the new clear signals from the cacophony of the background noise? How soon will we, as we did with Lord Lawson, start to hiss?

The new information comes in three chunks. First, what seems to be happening to the economy, for that determines the background to both the spending and the revenue side of the budget. Second, what is new about public spending, for that will ultimately determine what happens to overall tax levels. And third, to what extent is the tax system being fine-tuned to discourage things that the Government does not want people to do, and encourage things it does.

As far as the economy is concerned, it will be a humble-pie time - or at least it ought to be - for growth this year is clearly going to be much lower than the Chancellor was predicting last summer. Then he forecast 2 per cent growth this year. We all knew that was for the birds, and said so at the time. By November, he was down to 1 to 1.5



Lara Croft, the computer game heroine, is the pin-up of high-tech industries - but we are more ambivalent towards encouraging low-tech industries

per cent, which still seemed a bit unlikely. Now the forecast will probably be 0.5 to 1 per cent, which looks more reasonable. The more contrite the Chancellor is about previous overestimates, the greater the credibility of the new estimates.

The next thing to watch for will be the forecast for next year. Will there be a solid recovery in the year 2000 after the pause this year? If so, why? Is the Chancellor worried about the slow-down in Europe, for growth in Euroland ground almost to a halt in the last three months of last year? If growth has been lower than expected, why will the Government's finances be better? It is partly because that growth in revenue tends to lag behind the growth of the economy, so that the Government is now receiving the benefit of the strong growth of a year or 18 months ago; it is partly because the tax increases that have been slid in over the last two years; and it is partly because spending has been held down.

That leads to the spending side. One of the characteristics of our Chancellor is that he keeps announcing new spending moves, which sound impressive, but when

you add up what is actually being spent, it is really very small. The Government has also been quite good at trying to extract more efficiency from the public sector, so the combination of small dollops of money and a general drive for better quality has given the appearance that it is running its own activities reasonably well. That is probably a fair judgement. But when examining public spending plans, look for indications of the output as much as the amount of money going in. Is the government really spending more, and if so, how well? And to what extent is it shuffling money between departments?

One thing is absolutely sure. If the government is really spending more money, the tax burden will rise. If not, then the tax burden will not rise. Elementary, but not something that Chancellors tend to shout about. And taxes? We know quite a lot about what will happen, thanks to the wise policy of having a green, or outline, Budget in November. There will be the announcement of a new 10 per cent starting band for income tax. Other hot political issues will be whether tax is applied to child benefit (probably not) and

what happens to the married tax allowance. There will be higher taxes on petrol and tweaks to the car tax system. But perhaps the most important tweak to the tax system - the one which will determine whether the budget can really be used to improve the growth prospects of the country - will be what Gordon Brown does to stimulate enterprise.

That might seem an odd point to make. Labour governments have not historically been very strong in the enterprise department. It is to the great credit of this one that it is aware that the rate at which new businesses start is one of the most important determinants, maybe the most important, of the future wealth of this nation.

For Gordon Brown, this is particularly important. He won't be Chancellor for ever; he will either be promoted or sacked. How do you make your mark? How do you really change things, hopefully for the better? Answer: you try and improve the long-term growth performance of the economy.

The most interesting aspect of this is the desire to boost risk-taking, the aim to inject something of

the fizz of American entrepreneurship into the British psyche. In terms of economic self-confidence, there is a gigantic gulf between the self-confident "we can conquer the world" attitude of the new businesses sprouting all over America (often started by 18-year-olds) and the worried, inward-looking "play it safe" attitude of much of continental Europe. Britain is somewhere in between: we have some of the American vigour, but also some of the continental timidity. But what can you do?

We will learn today, though we won't know the outcome for a decade or more. There will be a new package of measures to promote business start-ups, and to make it easier for small companies to raise risk capital. But can you make people want to take risks? It is not just a question of money; it is also a question of temperament, of style, of the values that society puts on different human behaviour.

As a society, we clearly welcome people making money from performance: football stars and pop singers are the heroes and heroines of the age. We don't, in general, welcome business people making

money. We welcome people starting high-technology businesses, but we are more ambivalent to people taking over and trying to improve low-tech ones. Contrast the attitude towards Ian Livingstone, creator of Lara Croft, and the people trying to cope with the backlog of two generations of underinvestment in the nation's trains.

Is Lara Croft high technology? That is the other thing. The new industries we are creating are brain industries: software as much as hardware. High-tech is not just Cambridge science park, though it is that too. It is bright people with ideas. When Gordon Brown stands up today, test what he says against Lara Croft: does anything he does make it more likely that talented Britons will take risks to create the new companies of tomorrow?

If not, then he will ultimately be judged a failure, like so many of his predecessors of both parties - and for that matter, like Colbert.

Colbert was a great initiator of state scientific enterprises. It seemed to work for a while, but ultimately English market-led policies outpaced French, state-led ones. Clever plucking isn't enough.

RIGHT OF REPLY

JUDITH SUMMERS



A Hampstead village resident replies to David Aaronovitch's attack on the area and its residents

IT'S A surprise to see a columnist supposedly concerned with world events preoccupied with a little affair like Hampstead's new traffic system. Let's hope his view of world affairs isn't as hysterical as his view of Hampstead.

According to Aaronovitch, Hampstead residents opposed to the scheme are "frightened conservative people who have wielded power in the old world and don't want it changed". On what does he base this sociological damnation?

Starting this spring, at a cost of around £160,000, the so-called "experimental" scheme will impose an ill-thought-out system of one-way streets, ugly signs and road closures on a beautiful and historic area. Hampstead streets are narrow, and at rush-hour there can be jams and even odd bouts of road rage. But for the remaining hours, and at weekends, the streets are virtually car-free. Camden Council proposes a sledge-hammer solution for a small problem that could be solved for a fraction of the cost by a few speed-humps and traffic-tables.

The local ambulance service and fire brigade have condemned the scheme as positively dangerous. And villagers already feel victimised by the inverted snobbery that Aaronovitch displays. Historic Hampstead is fast becoming just another urban theme park of cappuccino shops and mobile-phone showrooms.

The East Heath Association, whose "salmon-coloured" leaflet offended Aaronovitch's sensibilities, is all for traffic-calming measures. What it objects to is a heavy-handed one-way system that is both potentially dangerous and expensive. Is it just class solidarity with the People's Republic of Camden that makes Aaronovitch so in favour of this scheme? Or maybe his street is one of the lucky few that will not be blighted by it?

Resisting the republic

TUESDAY BOOK

LOYALISTS

BY PETER TAYLOR. BLOOMSBURY. £16.99



IRISH REPUBLICANS used to believe that their enemy was the British state. Drive the Brits out and Ulster Protestants would realise that they were really Irish and everyone would live happily ever after in an all-Ireland socialist republic. Peter Taylor's book is about the people who proved the republicans wrong.

Three times this century, Ulster Protestants have become vigilantes. The first Ulster Volunteer Force, formed in 1912 to resist home rule, was a genuine mass movement. Led by the Ulster aristocracy, it recruited 90,000 men and bought a ship-load of guns. Rebellion was averted by the outbreak of war in 1914: the UVF was incorporated into the British Army as the 36th Division. In the unrest that followed the partition of the island, the UVF was

again mobilised and again co-opted by the state, this time as the Ulster Special Constabulary.

The third UVF was different. It was formed by a very small group of working-class ultra-Unionists who were persuaded, despite the lack of an active IRA, that republicans were planning to mark the 50th anniversary of the Dublin Easter Rising by launching a coup in Belfast in 1966. They protected the state by ineptly

murdering three people who had nothing at all to do with the IRA.

When the real Troubles began four years later, the UVF's leader, Gusto Spence, was languishing in Crumlin Road prison. Skipping jail while out on parole for his daughter's wedding, Spence spent four months of 1972 at liberty on the Shankill Road, in which time the UVF recruited, armed itself and set about a campaign of brutal retaliation for IRA attacks. At the same time, thousands of young men joined the vigilante groups that became the Ulster Defence Association.

In this well-informed companion to his BBC television series, Peter Taylor details the subsequent history of the UVF and UDA as they combined naked sectarian murder with occasionally well-targeted attacks on leading republicans (made easier in the Eighties by the rise of Sinn Féin as a political force). The most remarkable feature of that history is the emergence of a clear political vision from a culture of knee-jerk retaliation. Inspired by Spence's appreciation that if Northern Ireland were to have any future, it would have to accommodate the nationalist population, the UVF played a significant role in bringing about the ceasefires of 1994.

The world that produced Lenny Murphy and the Shankill Butchers also produced David Ervine and Billy Hutchinson - the only two Unionist leaders who really believed in the Good Friday agreement. While Ian Paisley was denouncing the deal and most Ulster Unionists were fatalistically endorsing it as better than it might

have been, the UVF's Progressive Unionist Party was positively promoting it as the way to a decent and fair society.

However precarious the Good Friday deal, that it is alive at all owes much to the refusal of the paramilitary leadership to endorse the martial rhetoric of some Unionist politicians. Small numbers of dissidents may try to derail the settlement, but the UVF and UDA will not again, as they did in the 1974 strike, provide the muscle for the politicians.

Taylor's book is readable and sensible in its assessment of sensitive issues. Although he concludes that Paisley sailed close to the wind in the Sixties, Taylor exonerates him from personal involvement in vigilante violence. He accepts evidence of limited security-force collusion in some loyalist activities but rejects the nationalist claim that the British security forces, rather than the UVF, bombed Dublin and Monaghan in 1974.

However, although Taylor's reporting is of the highest quality, in the end it disappoints because it fails to explain. Each facet of the paramilitaries - victim selection, organisation, political evolution, racketeering - is reasonably accurately described, but the links between them are not explored. Big, background questions are left unanswered.

For example, Portadown appears a number of times. It was the home of some of the "premature" paramilitaries of 1966 and of the UVF unit that bombed Dublin and Monaghan in 1974. Ulster Resistance, an Eighties movement that brought together the paramilitaries and the fringes of the rural evangelical world, was strongest there. It was the base of Billy "King Rat" Wright and the site of the annual Drumcree event. Why are Portadown Protestants so much more militant than, say, their Londonderry counterparts? Why do evangelical Protest-



Ulster Freedom Fighters gunman

antism and terrorism overlap in Portadown, when in Belfast those two constituencies are completely separate? Taylor reports, describes and illustrates the situation with revealing quotations from the key players; but he does not explain.

One final complaint: considering the profits the publisher must expect, the book's production is poor. It is littered with niggling errors. For instance, the Taoiseach is rendered "Taoisach" and named Bertie "Abnerne" (as in Caroline, Mrs Merton), and the account of Drumcree 1998 is rendered baffling by the sentence "The Orangemen were now allowed down the Garvaghy Road"; the fourth word should be "not". Despite that, Taylor has performed an important function in illuminating a neglected aspect of the Northern Ireland conflict which deserves to be widely read.

STEVE BRUCE

The reviewer is professor of sociology at the University of Aberdeen

TUESDAY POEM

THE SOPHISTICATE
BY ROBERT CRAWFORD

I am a tall, mid-Western gynaecologist
Arrived in Paris for my very first time,

Sure it's a city of the imagination
Solid as this herb in Montparnasse.

Paftseries, deep spinach roulades, wines,
Dark-varnished shelves of petites tartes oignons -

I buy a hat, a small cigar, and then,
Stepping up to give my keynote speech,

I clearly see its thirty numbered pages
Locked in the third drawer down, left far behind me

In Iowa, or dour Lincoln, Nebraska,
Second Pond, Joesville, or Junction Gulch.

Our poems today and tomorrow come from Robert Crawford's fourth collection, 'Spirit Machines' (Cape, £8)

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Stanley Kubrick

AS A film director, Stanley Kubrick was an obsessed perfectionist. He became a very mysterious personality, for he refused to give interviews. He kept out of the idiotic showbiz limelight, so his character was not diluted by over-exposure in the media. He preserved unusual artistic integrity, though he was not above sowing false trails in his personal and professional life.

His last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, so long in the making, so teasingly announced and coyly delayed, was the apotheosis of this hide-and-seek mentality. The stars, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, and even the bit players, had to agree to a contract stipulating no fixed time limit for the movie's completion, and that put the actors at the total mercy of the director's unpredictable caprices.

On the Internet, rumours were more than rife – they were ripe. The film is based on a story by the Austrian novelist Arthur Schnitzler, in which Nicole Kidman plays a drug-sniffing society woman with nymphomaniac tendencies. In a particularly steamy scene, Harvey Keitel was making love to her and suddenly ejaculated on her costume, after which Kubrick dismissed him and his place was taken by Sidney Pollack. An actor should simply act, and be in control of his emotions, not the slave of them. That was the Kubrick ethic.

We have waited 12 years for this new movie, since *Full Metal Jacket* (1987). If that film had been brought out in time, it would surely have beaten Oliver Stone's *Platoon* to the post for a directorial Oscar. As it was, Kubrick was never rewarded with that highest honour, and could not have cared less.

Kubrick was born and bred in the Bronx in New York in a family of Central European immigrants whose roots were in Romania, Hungary and Austria. Stanley was a rebel at school, so his father enrolled him in a chess academy to encourage serious thought – an institution of which he became the champion.

On his 12th birthday, his father presented him with a Graflex camera. This was the trigger to his future fame as a cineaste. On the way to school, carrying the camera in his lunch bag, he would snap local street scenes, and started selling his work to magazines, until he was hired by *Look* magazine. With a friend he made his first low-budget film, documentaries about boxing and a flying preacher.

In 1953, with the cash he won from a chess contest, he made his first "cheapie" feature, *Fear and Desire*, prophetically a war story set in an imaginary kingdom. It already showed his allegiance to great film noir creators Fritz Lang, Samuel Fuller, Robert Siodmak, artists of violent expressionism. Kubrick was to exploit in the crimes of *A Clockwork Orange* and the assassination of *Quilty* in *Lolita*. This early work led to his being placed under contract in Hollywood where

he made his first big feature, *The Killing*, in 1956.

Unlike many other directors, Kubrick did not allow himself to be manipulated by the studios. He oversaw all his scripts, made his own final cut, always maintained his personal style of film-making, and insisted upon the originality, often shocking at the time, of his subjects. He did not limit himself to one genre.

In 1960 he launched into a lavish peplum, *Spartacus*, starring an actor, Kirk Douglas, who was to become his friend, and closely associated with his future work. "I tried with only limited success to make the film as real as possible," he commented. "But I was up against a pretty dumb script" – by the blacklisted Dalton Trumbo – "which was rarely

Kubrick did not allow himself to be manipulated by the studios. He oversaw all his scripts, made his own final cut and insisted upon the originality, often shocking at the time, of his subjects

faithful to what is known about *Spartacus*. Nevertheless, it is a great spectacle, with interesting touches of outrageous kitsch reminiscent of the best Ricardo Freda.

But it was Kubrick's 1962 version of Nabokov's erotic thriller *Lolita* that made his name a household word. Because of censorship problems in America, it was shot in Britain. "How did they ever make a movie of *Lolita*?" was the leading come-on in the extravagant studio publicity. It drew the wrath of small-town America and British blue-noses. Accusations of incest and paedophilia have haunted the movie to the present day: a limp new version ran foul of a society recently reawakened to the perils of paedophilia, and that condemned it outright before it had even been shown.

At the time, the project seemed insane. One of the century's greatest novels, it did not really lend itself to convincing scripting, because Nabokov's voice is so unique, so immaculately personal, so brilliantly literary in its evocation of certain weird aspects of American social life. The book is too funny to be really disturbing, and this is partly what made Kubrick's version less sulphurous than it might have been.

Nabokov's prose is so enthrallingly persuasive, but much of it was lost in the simple portrayal of plot and character. Kubrick worked closely with the novelist on the script, and Nabokov was appalled by what happened to his studied aesthetic tone, although the actors, James Mason with his seductive Cambridge drawl, goofy Sue Lyon as Lolita, and the immense Shelley Winters as the eternal vivacious middle-class American widow, were perfectly directed, totally in Kubrick's control.

In 1963, the really great Kubrick period took flight with the immensely popular Peter Sellers in the multi-personality roles of *Dr Strangelove* with its ironically throwaway subtitle "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb". (The enormous success of the film did not, of course, stop the arms race or end the Cold War – our leaders are impervious to irony.) *Dr Strangelove* satirised the military unmercifully, as if it were a black comedy version of his 1958 film *Paths of Glory*.

Kubrick's peculiar sense of humour in *Dr Strangelove* expressed clearly the anti-war, anti-nuclear spirit of the times, much as *Oh What a Lovely War* derides the almost sacrosanct First World War. So he shows us images of nuclear disaster backed by Vera Lynn belting out "We'll Meet Again".

The same highly personal feeling for the appropriateness of inappropriate music is found in the space-docking sequence in 2001 with "The Blue Danube" waltz, and in a sickening punch-up in *A Clockwork Orange* in which Malcolm McDowell warbles "Singin' in the Rain" – a criticism of popular sentimental song as well as a pointed sign for irresponsibility in the young.

Full Metal Jacket ends with the jaunty rhythms of the Mickey Mouse Club. It begins with pictures of young recruits being shown by a Marine Corps demon barber to the time of an insipid lyric reminiscent of the syrupy ditties of the Second World War. One gets the feeling that nothing has changed in the army. The helpless young innocents are simply cannon fodder. Here, too, the music plays a significant atmospheric role: "These Boots Were Made for Walkin'" and "Surfin' Bird", with the "kiddies" song at the close.

Dr Strangelove was followed in 1968 by 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, with a scenario by the magnificent SF master Arthur C. Clarke. It was the first of a long series of outer space movies, now regrettably cheapened by overuses of special effects and loud explosions.

Nineteen seventy-one saw *A Clockwork Orange* come under attack. Set in a violent future, it provoked outrage in Britain, and the anti-hero of Malcolm McDowell was accused of promoting clean-living youth, of encouraging violence and the sort of picturesque hoodliganism that has now become commonplace everywhere. One of the most shock-



A vision of humanity's ineradicable beastliness: Kubrick on the set of *The Shining*, 1980

Reuters

ing episodes was for many people a rape played as a youthful romp. It seemed to suggest a total contempt for women and for sexual mores at that period, and even held ominous intimations of neo-fascism.

Kubrick spoke out against the censor in defence of his film. But in the curious fateful fashion of uncharted and unconnected events, soon after it was screened there were rapes and killings and gang confrontations between unemployed youths that might have been taken to be inspired by the violence in the movie.

Though it was totally irrational, Kubrick lost his cool at the reports and had the film withdrawn. He had also, it is said, been personally threatened. His contract stated that he could have the power to withdraw the film from the public domain, and it has not been played in Britain since the late Seventies. Its harsh vision of a London of the future has now well and truly entered the present of all our cities.

In 1975 Kubrick surprised everyone by making *Barry Lyndon*, on the surface a pretty period film seemingly entirely lit by candlelight. Behind the charm, however, lies the true Kubrick vision of humanity's in-

eradicable beastliness. This vision was raised to even greater heights of genuine horror in *The Shining* (1980) with a maniacal axe murderer played by the insanely grinning Jack Nicholson.

The literary sources of Kubrick's films are varied. He obviously was a discriminating and widely read lover of books. But his adaptations of great literary works and minor ones – from Nabokov's *Lolita* to Terry Southern's *Dr Strangelove*, with the strange branch of Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon* sticking out from among the moderns – were sometimes, under his close scrutiny, far from the originals. For example, Nabokov's work is pure language play on a banal love-and-murder framework, but for Kubrick the film-maker the sense of language did not really exist.

He makes the deliberately flimsy plot more important than the words, and in doing so gives us superb satirical pictures of American daily life and speech, only hinted at by the original text. His use in other films of army slang tends to dehumanise the characters, almost as in 2001 the robot Hal's deformed speech makes him appear to be on the level of a true sub-human,

though with a sense of humour lacking in the crew of the space ship. Similarly, we value Burgess's novel for the sake of its language, a new dialect that we take pleasure in deciphering and coming to terms with. But this is missing from Kubrick's concept of the book, and that lack depressed Burgess until the sales suddenly shot up to phenomenal heights. His author's honour had been redeemed.

Kubrick had been planning a new interpretation of the Napoleonic campaigns. But in 1987 he directed the only real masterpiece on the Vietnam War, *Full Metal Jacket*. The basic training episodes and later sequences in which the men have to confront their first prisoners and express their homesick feelings about the land they are trapped in form some of the best documentary moments of a brutally realistic film. The title refers to a shell casing representing the soldier who is outwardly tough but inwardly empty, the sort who can survive such inhuman ordeals.

This troubling sense of the frailty of human character becomes even more pointed in the deeply moving portrait of a sensitive misfit, a figure of deep anguish, superbly portrayed

by Vincent D'Onofrio. The drill sergeant is an awesome brute with a voice that could shatter the sound barrier: he is a racist and a sexist whose only aim is to humiliate his men. Recent revelations prove that he is no fiction.

Full Metal Jacket was made in England, where Kubrick had lived in exile since *Lolita*. He had become a virtual recluse – who can blame him? But one of the reasons for this self-immurement was his very understandable dislike of air travel.

The years in England were not wasted. They saw the incubation of what was to be Stanley Kubrick's last film, the oddly titled *Eyes Wide Shut*, for which we shall have to wait until July to pass judgement. Whatever it is, it will be Kubrick through and through, unmistakably original. The master who did not live to see 2001 will be remembered that month with this posthumous birthday present to his devoted fans.

JAMES KIRKOP

Stanley Kubrick, film director, producer and scriptwriter; born New York 26 July 1928; married three times (three daughters); died Childwickbury, Hertfordshire 7 March 1999.

Dr Alexander Sherlock

ALEXANDER SHERLOCK represented the former South-West Essex constituency in the European Parliament from 1979 until 1989. He was known in particular for his wit and the breadth of his scientific knowledge. Two ills he attempted to cure at Strasbourg were costly bureaucracy and verbal incontinence, using blunt language (such as "cretins" for interrupters) that might have caused him trouble had he ever been a Westminster MP.

As a European Democratic Group MEP, Sherlock was more successful in his official duties as front-bench spokesman on the environment and in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. Whether speaking on budgets, hazardous waste, pollution in general or the quality of beers and wines, he could be relied upon to get quickly to the heart of the matter.

In a debate on dumping at sea (10 June 1986), he contended that the Rhine and the Meuse accounted for "well in excess of 20 times the



Sherlock: blunt language

highest emission that could ever be made by the United Kingdom into the North Sea alone". Sherlock went on: "I would say that the dirty man of Europe is collectively a responsibility of those potentially beautiful but filthy rivers."

Second, disposal in this way looks upon the environment as if it were divisible. The environment is indivisible.

One cannot protect part of it without increasing pressure on land disposal sites. I invite those select few who remain here for these debates to start looking at the disposal sites in their backyard and say what we are going to do with it all. There is a lot of stuff from doctors' gloves all the way down to sewage sludge. You may turn your back on that every morning but it has been one of the problems of *Homo sapiens* all the time.

Educated at Magdalen College School, Oxford, and Stowmarket Grammar School, Sherlock achieved his MB BS Honours degree at the London Hospital and, while a flight lieutenant in the RAF, researched air sickness.

As a general practitioner in Felixstowe from 1948 until 1979, he worked with the consequences of such disasters as the East Coast Flood of 31 January 1963 that claimed 39 lives in the town. He himself became a casualty when called to an explosion that killed three men at Felixstowe gasworks in 1956. He was caught in a second blast and suffered severe leg injuries.

He found relaxation in legal stud-

ies and, in 1961, was called to the Bar. He applied his various skills as assistant deputy coroner for St Pancras in 1971 and 1972. He was also Suffolk county surgeon for the St John Ambulance Brigade, a member of the former Felixstowe Urban District Council, of East Suffolk County Council and Harwich Harbour Conservancy Board (now Harwich Haven Authority) and had active roles in Rotary and Freemasonry.

After leaving the European Parliament, Sherlock continued to live at Felixstowe, where he loved to work in his garden.

DON BLACK

Alexander Sherlock, medical practitioner, barrister and politician; born Coventry, Warwickshire 14 February 1922; called to the Bar, Gray's Inn 1961; MEP (Conservative) for South-West Essex 1979-89; CBE 1989; married 1945 Peggy Scarff (died 1975; one son, two daughters); 1976 Eileen Hall (one stepdaughter); died Felixstowe, Suffolk 18 February 1999.

Eddie Dean

AS HOLLYWOOD phenomena go, the singing cowboys were a comparatively short-lived one; they made their first appearance a few years after the advent of talkies and had all but disappeared two decades later.

Cowboy songs had been a sheet-music staple since the turn of the century and in 1925 a genuine Texas cowboy, Carl T. Sprague, enjoyed sales of nearly a million copies with his "When the Work's All Done This Fall", but it was the movies that would most successfully bring together music and the Old West.

John Wayne is usually cited as the first on-screen singing cowboy, struggling to bring to life the character of Singin' Sandy in *Riders of Destiny* (1933) and setting the basic premiss for each of the musical horse operas that were to follow: white-stetsoned good guy rides into town, overcomes adversity and resident bad guy whilst carrying a tune and winning the girl.

By the decade's end, Wayne had been succeeded by a string of others, two of whom, Gene Autry and Roy Rogers, proved amongst the biggest box-office draws of the era. If Eddie Dean never quite made it into that league, he can lay claim to having been the finest vocalist in the genre, a talent that gained him the nickname "The Golden Voice".

He was born Edgar Dean Glosup, the seventh son of a seventh son of a seventh son, in Posey, Texas. His schoolteacher father instilled in him a love of singing and he began his career performing gospel music, first with the Vaughan and then the Stamps Quartets. He eventually joined his brother Jimmy in Chicago, where they worked as a duet



Dean: "The Golden Voice" Kopal

team on the famous WLS *National Barn Dance* before moving on to station WNAH which broadcast out of Yankton, South Dakota.

In 1934 and 1935 they cut a series of duets for ARC and Decca, though none were particularly successful. A return to Chicago saw the pair get involved in radio soap opera until, in 1937, they headed south-west to California. Supporting roles in the films of both Ken Maynard and Gene Autry quickly followed, as did radio work with the hillbilly comedienne Judy Canova.

From 1946, Dean received top billing on a series of some 20 low-budget films made for the PRC studio, starting with *The Harmony Trail*. Showcases for Bill Crespinel's new colour film process, Cinecolor, they were among the first colour movies of their type. Starring alongside leading ladies like Shirley Patterson and Jennifer Holt, Dean both wrote and performed the numbers

featured in these largely forgotten pictures. They included *Colorado Serenade* and *The Caravan Trail* (both 1946), *West To Glory* (1947) and *The Hawk of Powder River* (1948). He often found himself accompanied by the western harmony group Andy Parker and the Flatmates.

In 1948, the year of his last PRC film, Dean enjoyed his greatest success as a songwriter when his fellow singing cowboy Jimmy Wakely took "One Has My Name, the Other Has My Heart" to the top of both the pop and country charts. Co-written by Dean with his wife, "Dearest", and a fellow tunesmith, Hal Blair, it proved an early and durable example of the "cheatin'" song and was covered magnificently by Jerry Lee Lewis in 1969.

Over the years Dean recorded for a number of record labels including Decca, Majestic, Mercury, Crystal, Sage and Sand, Shasta (owned by Jimmy Wakely) and Capitol. If few of his own recordings charted, the superb "On the Banks of the Sunny San Juan" (1941) and his "I Dreamed of a Hillbilly Heaven" (1955) remain classics.

Dean later became a mainstay of the western festivals that proliferate throughout the south-western United States and in 1993 was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame, his voice still a reportedly rich and supple instrument into its ninth decade.

PAUL WADE

Edgar Dean Glosup (Eddie Dean), singer, songwriter, actor; born Posey, Texas 9 July 1907; married 1931 Lorene Donnelly (one son, one daughter); died Newhall, California 4 March 1999.

The Emir of Bahrain

YOUR OBITUARY of the Emir of Bahrain (by Adel Darwish, 8 March) contained some errors, writes Mansoor Al-Jamri. The Shia in Bahrain are not migrants from Iran. Instead, more than 90 per cent of them are the indigenous Arab people of Bahrain, known as Baharna. They have inhabited Bahrain for more

than 3,000 years and speak only Arabic. They are described – amongst many references – in the book *Personal Column* (1960) by Sir Charles Belgrave, who administered Bahrain between 1926 and 1957.

Second, it is not true that the majority of the 40 members of the Shura Council appointed by the

Emir in 1993 and then in 1996-97 were made up from the elected members of the 1973-75 National Assembly; instead there are only a handful.

Third, your writer explains the current political crisis in terms of frustrated children committing arson. He probably does not know about the series of petitions since

1992 calling for the restoration of parliament. These were sponsored by all sections of Bahrain society, not only the Shia. They preceded riots and any stone throwing.

The obituary photograph was not of Sheikh Isa, but of his son, and successor as Emir, Sheikh Hamad. We apologise for the error.

JP 11/10/150

Joe DiMaggio

BASEBALL IS a sport which reveres its statistics, one in which numbers can transcend simple arithmetic to become a catechism of faith. For the believer, 406 signifies only one thing - Ted Williams's average in 1941, the last time anyone batted over 400 for a season. Henceforth, 70 will be forever shorthand for Mark McGwire's single season home run record. Or take 2,632, the number of consecutive games played by Cal Ripken Jr between 1983 and 1998, almost certainly never to be surpassed. And then there is 56. For the uninitiated, the figure is no more than part of the seven times table. For the baseball fan, however, it summons up at once Joe DiMaggio's hitting streak between mid-May and mid-July 1941, a record which also may never be broken.

Ripken, Williams, McGwire: all of them, like DiMaggio, iconic players, present or future Hall of Famers and as such guaranteed eternal veneration at baseball's temple at Cooperstown in upstate New York. But DiMaggio was something more. Once a decade or so American sport throws up a figure who helps define a generation. Babe Ruth of course, Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Joe Louis, and today Michael Jordan. Joe DiMaggio unambiguously belongs in this company. For his baseball prowess with the New York Yankees, he was known as "Joltin' Joe" or - a title which better captures his grace and fluency as a player - "The Yankee Clipper". But for a couple of decades, either side of 1950, his fame and popularity exceeded that of kings and presidents.

His marriage to Marilyn Monroe ranks up with the Lindbergh kidnapping and the O.J. Simpson case as a celebrity event for the ages. Singlehandedly Joe DiMaggio rescued the reputation of Italo-Americans from the depths to which Al Capone and his ilk had dragged it. After his retirement in 1951 his legend only grew. Ernest Hemingway used him as a symbol in *The Old Man and the Sea*. He became spokesman for a product, Mr Coffee, which became part of the national vocabulary. Paul Simon referred to him in the theme song from the hit film *The Graduate*, in lines which became a catchphrase in faraway countries where baseball was unknown: "Where have you gone Joe DiMaggio? A nation turns its lonely eyes to you... But Joltin' Joe has left and gone away..."

Until the end, he was one of America's untouchables, a modest and unassuming man who occupied the function of secular saint, who would occasionally emerge from his Florida home to participate in a great baseball occasion. I saw him only once in the flesh, a slow-moving figure, his hair crinkly silver, on the night in September 1995 at Camden Yards in Baltimore when Ripken broke the previous consecutive games record. It had been previously held by the great Lou Gehrig, with whom DiMaggio had played in the Yankee line-up of the late 1930s. He made a brief speech, linking baseball's past and present. On a moving night, it was the most moving moment.

Joseph Paul DiMaggio Jr was born, the eighth of nine children, to Joseph and Rosalia DiMaggio, immigrants from Sicily who had settled in California. It was a baseball family; not only Joe but his brothers Vince and Dominic would also become major league players (though the family claimed its finest ballplayer was another brother, Tom, who instead became a crab fisherman like his father). In time-honoured tradition, Joe learnt the rudiments of the game in the sandlots, before becoming an outstanding player at San Francisco Junior High School - even though there was no money to buy him a proper uniform.

On the recommendation of his brother Vince, he started with the city's minor league team, the San Francisco Seals in 1932, at the age of 17. His talent was immediately apparent, but he hit as sweetly as an angel. Within two years, he was snapped up by the most famous and successful team in baseball.



The Yankee Clipper: DiMaggio was a statistical immortal

Hulton Getty

That year, though DiMaggio was suffering serious knee problems, the Yankees acquired his services for \$25,000 and five players, on the understanding that for two more years DiMaggio would remain with the Seals, honing his skills and gaining experience. By the time he moved to New York and the big time for the 1936 season, the shy but sublimely self-confident newcomer was the most trumpeted rookie since the First World War. He did not disappoint.

In his first year, despite a nagging foot injury, the young centrefielder hit .323, and impressed not only with the bat but also for his vastly improved fielding, highlighted by a sensational catch in the Yankees' successful World Series campaign that year. In 1939 he set a career hitting mark of .381, and won the first of two successive American League batting titles. At the plate, he combined power and style, a majestic figure who regularly exceeded 30 home runs a season. Before he arrived, the Yankees had hit a barren spot; during his first seven years, they won the series five times. In 1941 occurred the feat which made him a statistical immortal.

The season had begun, by his standards, appallingly: a batting average of .177, in what DiMaggio called "the worst

slump of my life - I looked terrible. The harder you try, the worse it gets." Then everything changed. On 15 May he began to hit - and did so in every game until 17 July. Hitting a baseball safely is famously difficult: the best hitters manage it only three out of 10 times. Yet DiMaggio managed at least one hit in 56 games without a break. The previous mark of 44 had stood for 42 years, and DiMaggio's new record has not even been approached in more than half a century.

That year he won his second Most Valuable Player award. Willowy and dapper, handsome, the Yankees' idol had become a figure in New York society, voted one of the 10 best-dressed men in the United States. In 1939 he married Dorothy Arnold, a Hollywood starlet, who gave him a son, Joe DiMaggio III.

As with so many of his generation, DiMaggio's career was interrupted by the Second World War. He volunteered for service in February 1943, giving up his \$43,500 salary for \$50 a month as a private, serving in an air-force physical training programme. The interruption cost him three seasons, and perhaps a chance of cracking some of baseball's other records. But, when he reappeared in 1946, normal service was resumed.

In 1949, DiMaggio became baseball's first \$100,000-a-year man. That year he missed two months with a damaged heel, before returning to face the all-conquering Boston Red Sox. DiMaggio belted four home runs in three games, and an epic season ended with the Yankees catching the Sox for the AL championship, and going on to defeat the Brooklyn Dodgers in the World Series. 1 October 1949 was Joe DiMaggio Day at Yankee Stadium, when a man whose comeback had made him a national hero told 70,000 fans: "I want to thank the Good Lord for making me a Yankee." Never before or since, had baseball been more popular.

Adulation could not, however, erase the discomfort of constant bodily pain. During another shortened season in 1950, he none the less managed to hit .301, and that year, as each year between 1949 and 1953, New York again won the World Series. But DiMaggio had had enough. On 11 December 1951, after a final season disrupted by injury the Yankee Clipper announced his retirement.

As a player he had been a loner, liked and respected but never one for nights of hell-raising with his team mates. In the Yankee centrefield he was succeeded by Mickey Mantle, an authentic hell-raiser and linchpin of yet another generation of championship teams. DiMaggio was meanwhile fated to a sporting afterlife of permanent celebrity.

His marriage to Dorothy Arnold had broken up in 1944 when he was in the military. In the early 1950s he met a rising and stunningly attractive young actress named Marilyn Monroe. After a whirlwind romance, they were married in 1954. The union was doomed from the outset; the retiring and private superstar of the sports arena could not cope with the synthetic, brash and intrusive world of Hollywood, and was jealous of the endless attention lavished upon his wife. After only nine months they were divorced. But the couple remained close. DiMaggio helped arrange medical treatment for Marilyn as her life disintegrated. When she died in 1962, it was he who organised her funeral. He blamed the Kennedy brothers, Jack and Bobby, each of them her lover, for hastening her death. Years later, when he met the then Senator Bobby Kennedy at a baseball function, DiMaggio refused even to shake RFK's proffered hand.

Thereafter he faded from the public limelight. But his name remained among the most instantly recognisable in America. He devoted himself to philanthropy and charities, including the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida. With the Yankees he kept in touch, throwing out the traditional first ball each season's opening day at Yankee Stadium, and whenever the club reached the World Series, becoming - if possible - more dignified with every passing year. But it is as a player he will be above all remembered, one of the finest in history and synonymous with baseball's truly golden age.

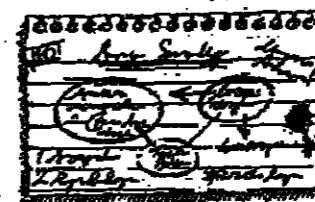
RUPERT CORNWELL

Joseph Paul DiMaggio, baseball player: born Martinez, California 25 November 1914; married 1939 Dorothy Arnold (one son; marriage dissolved 1944); 1954 Marilyn Monroe (marriage dissolved 1954); died Hollywood, Florida 8 March 1999.



DiMaggio's marriage to Marilyn Monroe was doomed. It lasted just nine months

Corbis



EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL NOTES

TONY DODD

Animal surgeons from outer space

ANIMALS COME very high up the British agenda. We love our pets, and we are sentimental about cute and cuddly farmyard animals. So it is surprising that we have made so little of a phenomenon involving attacks on our domestic and wild animals by an unknown and apparently insatiable predator.

Cows, horses, sheep, pigs, cats, deer, badgers, foxes and even mice are being systematically butchered in a manner that appears, at first sight, to be ritualistic except that the method of carrying out the mutilation seems to be way ahead of any technology known to man.

The corpses are not the messy gory savaged remains of a natural predator kill. They are neat, clinically tidy, with a total blood loss from the animal yet without any signs of blood loss at the site of the wound or on the ground nearby. Further, an astonishing catalogue of surgical procedures has been carried out on them. Internal organs have been removed through small cuts, which appear to have been sealed or cauterised. Sometimes the animal seems to have been sedated, and there is usually no sign of disturbance, not even the animal's own footprints, around the scene.

These strange deaths have been occurring not only in Britain, but all over the world. The only major study of them has been carried out in America, where an Emmy-

winning documentary, *A Strange Harvest*, was broadcast in 1980. It was made by Linda Moulton Howe, a respected journalist, who started her investigations when she heard of a few bizarre animal deaths. She surmised that the mutilations might be part of a secret government research programme, possibly monitoring pollution and contamination caused by radiation leak or accidental poison release. She was expecting to unmask a government cover-up.

Instead, she came to realise that, although the US government was aware of the deaths, it was not responsible for them. She reached the conclusion that the deaths are the work of alien visitors to this planet, who are carrying out medical experiments on animal organs.

How can anyone be sure that these deaths are not the work of vandals or animals? Pathology reports in the US have shown that the incisions in the flesh have been made with high heat, which cooked the haemoglobin at the edge of the wound. The cuts have a hardened edge, not consistent with the type of lasers we use today and besides, if lasers were being used, we would be looking at very sophisticated vandals indeed, able to transport power generators to the scenes of the deaths. As the bodies are often found in remote places, with no signs of

disturbance around them, this is unlikely.

The mutilations come in clusters, either with individual cases in the same area over a matter of weeks or more spectacularly with several animal corpses being found together. Often these are animals which would never be together in nature such as sheep and foxes.

After a spate of sheep deaths in an area of the north-east coast of England, farmers rigged up infra-red cameras triggered by any movement in a particular field. They were positioned so that sheep moving about in the night would not fire them, but if anything taller than a sheep entered the field the cameras would record it. The following morning, they found another mutilated lamb, with the familiar neat holes in its body the organs removed. But, when the films were developed, they showed only small white clouds on black backgrounds.

The one common factor with the mutilations is reports from farmers of strange glowing lights hovering in the air over the fields the night before. This suggests an explanation: the "night surgeons" are neither human nor animal, but come from one of the billions of stars in the countless galaxies beyond our Solar System.

Tony Dodd is the author of *Alien Investigator* (Headline, 11 March, £16.99)

Peaceful assembly was not unlawful

TUESDAY LAW REPORT

9 MARCH 1999

Director of Public Prosecutions v Jones and another
House of Lords (Lord Irvine of Lairg, Lord Chancellor, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Hope of Craighead, Lord Clyde and Lord Hutton)
4 March 1999

meaning of section 14A(5) of the 1986 Act.
Edward Fitzgerald QC and Kier Starmer (Liberty, and Douglas & Partners) for the appellants; Victor Temple QC and Michael Butt (Crown Prosecution Service) for the respondent.

Lord Irvine LC said that it had been assumed for the purposes of the hearing in the Divisional Court that the grass verge constituted part of the public highway, and that the group was peaceful and did not constitute an obstruction or a public nuisance.

The central issue in the case turned on two interrelated questions: what were the "limits" of the public's right of access to the public highway at common law; and what was the particular purpose for which the public had a right to use the public highway.

The basis of the Divisional Court's decision, in broad terms, was the proposition that

the public's right of access to the public highway was limited to the right to pass and repass, and to do anything incidental or ancillary to that right. Peaceful assembly was not incidental to the right to pass and repass.

However, the law today should recognise that the public highway was a public place, on which all manner of reasonable activities might go on. Provided those activities were reasonable, did not involve the commission of a public or private nuisance, and did not amount to an obstruction of the highway unreasonably impeding the primary right of the general public to pass and repass, they should not constitute a trespass. Subject to those qualifications, therefore, there would be a public right of peaceful assembly on the public highway.

Lord Clyde said that a peaceful assembly which did not obstruct the highway did not necessarily constitute a trespassary assembly so as to constitute an offence under section 14A(5) of the 1986 Act was in force.

If the purpose of the activity in question became the predominant purpose of the occupation of the highway, or if the occupation became more than reasonably transitional in terms of either time or space, then it might come to exceed the right to use the highway. Lord Hutton said that a peaceful and non-obstructive public assembly on a highway could, but would not always, constitute a reasonable user of the highway, and thus not be a trespass.

KATE O'HANLON, Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

IN MEMORIAM

MANSFIELD: Peter. On your third anniversary, I love and miss you more than ever. Thank you for all your help over the last year, Luis.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries. In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra.

BIRTHDAYS

Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin, President, Royal British Legion, 59; Mr Bill Beaumont, sports commentator, 47; Mr Andrew Bennett MP, 66; Dr Michael Brock, former Warden, St George's House, Windsor Castle, 79; M André Courrèges, couturier, 76; Sir Rosaleyn Cumming-Bruce, former Lord of Appeal, 87; Mr Bobby Fischer, chess player, 56; Mr John Golding, former trade union leader, 68; Maj-Gen John Groom, former director, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, 70; Mr Neil Hamilton, former MP, 50; Professor Sir Donald Harrison, laryngologist, 74; Dr Thomas Johnston, former Principal, Heriot-Watt University, 72; Sir Norman Lindop, chemist and educational administrator, 78; Sir

Nicholas Monek, former Permanent Secretary, Department of Employment, 64; Sir Donald Rattee, High Court judge, 62; Professor Kenneth Robinson, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Hong Kong, 85; Mr Howard Shelley, pianist and conductor, 49; Mr Mickey Spillane, novelist, 81; Lord Thurlow, former Governor of the Bahamas, 87; Professor Sir David Weatherall, haematologist, 66; Mr David Willetts MP, 43.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky, composer, 1839; Ernest Bevin, statesman, 1881; Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin, astronaut, 1934. Deaths: David Rizzio, musician and secretary to Mary, Queen of Scots, murdered

1566; George Burns (Nathan Birnbaum), comedian, 1996. On this day: Pope Gregory VII declared all married RC priests to be excommunicated, 1074; Louis-Philippe of France founded the French Foreign Legion, 1831. Today is the Feast Day of St Bosa, St Catharine of Bologna, St Dominic Savio, St Frances of Rome, St Gregory of Nyssa and St Pacianus.

LECTURES

British Museum: Helen Glaister, "Representations of Women in China", 11.30am; Lesley Fitton, "Women in Bronze Age Greece", 2.30pm. Zoological Society, London NW1: Professor J. Altman and Professor I. Newton: "Only Time Will Tell: the value of long-term studies", 5.30pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen holds an investiture at Buckingham Palace. The Duke of Edinburgh, President, chairs a meeting of the Royal Mint Advisory Committee at Buckingham Palace; and, as Patron, attends the London Federation of Clubs for Young People Lunch at Tallows Chandeliers' Hall, London EC4. The Duke of Kent, President, Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, addresses the Nato 50th Anniversary Conference, at the Banqueting House, London SW1; and attends the RUSI 50th Anniversary Conference Dinner, Lancaster House, London SW1.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

MALCOLM ROE, of Hove, has been indicted by the council to stop cording. Any more of it, and he's in the jug. Mr Roe's crime is neither, as Johnson defined it, to "commingle wool with a piece of wood" nor, in Thomas Shelton's 1612 phrase, to "be corded and purged of certain base things". On the contrary. In a

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

card, 11.

usage absent from the OED, he put tart's adverts in telephone kiosks: such droll invitations as those in which the phrase bound over has

nothing to do with keeping the peace. It's all a question of definition. Others still curd I dialled 01273 XXXXXX and asked a startled, laughing woman if she was envious of the sums now commanded by one who has done more than curd in a kiosk - Monica Lewinsky. "No, not at all - good luck to her!"

What a woman's got to do

Pushy, ballsy, mumsy, frilly, frumpy: the attributes required by women to succeed in the workplace.

That's what surveys say, so it must be true, mustn't it?

By Ann Treneman

It's a confusing time for women who want to get ahead at work. "Pushy Women Don't Make it to the Top" screams one headline. Evidently, to get promoted women need to be "cheerful, self-confident, motherly". This has me searching through the cupboard for my apron. But no sooner have I knotted the ties than I read something completely different. "If you really want to be successful, you have to adopt a masculine approach of being pushy and dominant. In short, you have to walk on dead bodies," says the next survey. Right. Apron off. Armour on. Then comes yet another survey on the subject, by the Industrial Society. "The writing is on the wall for the macho managers," comments one news report.

Well, all I can say is that it is nice to get out of that armour. At least I now know why I always carry around such a huge handbag. It's the only way to cope with having to change my identity so regularly. What a choice: pushy, ballsy, mumsy, frilly, frumpy! But, handbag aside, what really is going on here? Why are there so many surveys, with so many different results? Truly, do any of them really know what they are talking about?

It's a subject we cannot get enough of. The experts say that we have become obsessed with it for the simple reason that more women are at work than ever before, and more of them want careers, not just jobs. This is the Sexual Revolution at the Coffee Machine and, even though it's been going on for some time, we are still in chaos over what it all means.

For years we've been saying that everyone is equal, and that it was only a matter of time before this was reflected at work. But now we have had to admit that we were wrong.

"We have finally given ourselves permission to look at how men and women are different," says Liz Cook, a senior consultant for the Industrial Society. "We have had 20 years of equality legislation and affirmative action, and it hasn't really worked. What we've really got is that men and women are different and unequal."

This has thrown up a whole new set of questions. What are female personality traits? How do they fit into the male-dominated workplace? Should women change? Should the workplace change?

"Maybe," says Ms Cook, "by nature women aren't designed to be in the boardroom as it is today. That doesn't mean they won't be in tomorrow's, though."

But tomorrow isn't in this year's budget planning session, and firms insist that they want more women at the top today, especially now that such female-friendly skills as listening and mentoring are all the rage. But the reality is that only 1 per cent of executive directors on corporate boards are women. "The figures on this are pathetic," says Sue Vincincombe, of Cranfield School of Management.

Clearly, the situation is grave. Everyone agrees that something must be done - and so far that something has been to conduct a survey (make that a dozen). Press reports present each report as saying something completely different from the one before. But what is behind the headlines? Surely there must be some wisdom in all this survey lunacy? I decided to deconstruct the



Full armour or the mumsy oven glove? You've got to take those tough decisions, surveys say

Hulton Getty

most recent three surveys, and the results were instructive. Take the Industrial Society survey that concluded that the days of the macho manager are numbered. It turns out that this survey did not talk to managers at all. Instead it concentrated on the views of what it calls "followers", but what you and I would call underlings.

Not surprisingly, these underlings liked in their leaders such qualities as honesty, trust and humility. It seems that these are seen as female attributes; ergo, the conclusion that macho is out, female is in. Sounds great. The only problem is that this is really just a report on what employees wish were true. It has nothing to do with reality.

That is probably just as well. At least, that

is the only possible conclusion that can be drawn when looking at the results of another survey, conducted by Tuvia Melamed, a psychologist. It paints the real workplace as being awash with macho managers, who eat testosterone for breakfast and never talk when they can shout. Here the only successful woman is nothing short of a dominatrix. Dr Melamed is embarrassed about this. He realises that his results are politically incorrect.

"But the successful women did say they really had to be more male than the men," he said. "They were very, very tough and had to forget the caring, sensitive side of their personalities. Many compared themselves to Margaret Thatcher."

We don't want even to think about where that handbag will take us - and so on to the

details of the survey. It was carried out over a period of four years at Anglia Business School. It examined personality profiles of 1,243 British managers (949 men, 294 women) using something called the 16PF form 5. They were compared with the results obtained from "normal" British adults.

The results show that female managers' scores were closer to those of their male counterparts than those in the comparison group. When you look closely at the numbers, though, you can see that although there is a pattern, it really does not seem to be of the kind of proportions that merit comparison with Margaret Thatcher. Dr Melamed points out that there were also follow-up interviews. He assures me that he is not mistaken. "I wish that it were different," he says.

Well it can be. That is what is so great



about the world of surveys. Enter Peter York, style guru and management consultant. He is the man behind the survey that says that pushy women don't get to the top. His company, SRU Consultancy, conducted in-depth interviews with 16 women at the very top of their professions. It's a small survey but, as he points out, it's a small base group. But can it really be true? Do we need to don aprons and stop being pushy if we want to get to the top? What does it all mean? I wouldn't admit to being pushy (God forbid) but I did want to get straight to the point.

Me: Should I cease to be bossy, then?

Mr York: Well, how bossy are you?

Me: You aren't answering my question.

Mr York: It's quite a difficult one. What we were saying was very simple. This small group of women do not manifest the style that people would expect...

Me: Should I be mumsy and kind, then?

Mr York: We were not saying, be mumsy and kind. There are a variety of manoeuvres that women have used to get ahead that now look redundant and archaic. One was to be a pretend man. Another was to be the office vamp. That's very date-stamped.

Me: What about the survey by Dr Melamed that says that we have to be pretend men?

Mr York: I would have liked to have seen the data. I think the fundamental thing is that they are talking about a different set of human beings.

Me: Can you see why women like me are confused?

Mr York: I can. But I do think you should persevere.

What is really needed is a survey of the surveys. It is clear that these three are different mainly because of whom they interviewed, and what means they used. But they were not comparing apples and oranges as much as, perhaps, apples, pomegranates and pomes de terre.

It is possible that all three are essentially true: followers want leaders who are not macho, female managers act tougher in a male-dominated company, and women who have shattered the glass ceiling can no longer remember possessing even a shard's worth of pushiness.

Mr York suspects that many of the women at the very top are in denial, or have just forgotten about their early struggles. And he points out that they see the women ten years younger as being very different to themselves. "They see them as narrower, more obsessive and so concerned about career as to miss the substance of what they are doing. The younger women want a lot of it. They want to be part of a wolf pack. They are fantastically successful, and they want their partner to be, too."

I panic at the thought of having to find a wolf costume as well as an apron and all that dominatrix gear. It's a relief to call Sheila Wild, of the Equal Opportunities Commission, who says that who gets ahead depends as much on the structure of the workplace as on individual traits. "Oh, ignore the advice," she says. "Everyone has their own personality and temperament and you can only do what you can do. In some workplaces being mumsy works; in others it's more masculine. There are no hard-and-fast rules."

She says that more and more women are voting with their feet anyway, and setting up their own businesses. I'm sure there will be a survey on that soon.

THE JOYS OF MODERN LIFE

36. WOOD FIRES
BY JACK O'SULLIVAN

I AM the urban equivalent of a stubble burner. You will know my street on a bitter winter's day. It is the one with a whiff of wood smoke, reminiscent of a Cotswold village. Catch the smell and imagine drinking pints of Speckled Hen in old pubs while watching the rugby on Saturday afternoons. Come inside and you will find a roaring log fire. If the chimney hasn't been swept lately, there will be a smoky room that leaves your clothes smelling as though you spent the evening singing "Kumbaya" with the happy clappers. You will certainly forget that you are in inner-city Hackney, where the only illicit smoke you normally encounter is dope.

That's the trouble with real fires around here. You're not supposed to have them. You are meant to be satisfied with heating old smokeless fuel that comes in regulation-size lumps. In the heavily bounded life of the city, sending your fumes over to your next-door-neighbours is considered as impolite as encouraging your tomat to spray their front door step. Smokeless



The poor man's Aga

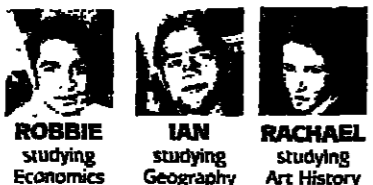
fuel simply does not have that rural authenticity essential for those of us who live in shoeboxes, but who imagine ourselves in a country pile. That fire is the poor man's Aga.

I caught the bug young. As a child of the three-day week in the early Seventies, I still pray for power cuts and fantasise about burnt sausages cooked over an open fire. My dad is another evangelist. As children, when we returned from Ireland on holidays and everyone else's car was stuffed with booze, he filled our boot with turf. Our street smelled like a sodden hamlet in the Aran Islands. Sadly, they don't sell turf here. In any case, I couldn't support the stripping out of the Irish bogs and all those spring flowers and heather. So wood has to do.

There are plenty of downsides to the illicit fire. Asthma, for example, and the endless trips to the petrol station log pile to fuel the little monster. However, the joys are many. Of course, it's illegal, but that is part of the attraction. A proper fire is a friend, better to look at than the telly. Who, with any sense of romance, could resist lying on the floor in the dark beside the dying embers and that empty bottle of Jameson?

How to dress in Manchester, if you're a student

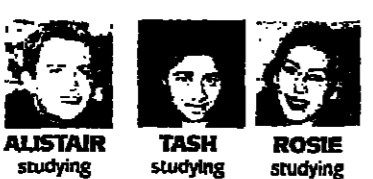
The way to spot Mancunians from a distance? They're the ones who look smart and strut. Unlike our chums at the university. By Cayte Williams



ROBBIE studying Economics, IAN studying Geography, RACHAEL studying Art History



LEONA was studying Maths, DANI studying Biology, DAVID studying Management



ALISTAIR studying Management, TASH studying Management, ROSIE studying French

SO WHAT does the modern student wear? And with which anthropological tribes does he or she choose to identify? Ian has a sort of urban hippy image: long hair in pony-tail, necklace, jeans and trainers. David is more eccentric, while Robbie is immaculately dressed in polo-necks and jackets. Only Alistair has been in the sartorial wilderness - until now.

"We call him Uncle Alfie," says Tash, "on account of his corduroy trousers, old-fashioned leather jacket and wavy hair." But when he went clubbing last week, his friends hardly recognised him. Now his hair is blond and spiky, and the cords have been ditched in favour of combat trousers and a black T-shirt. He's even lost weight. "He looks much better," observes Leona, "but he still can't dance."

David and Robbie are both rather dapper. "Style comes

from within, but clothes make you look better," waxes Robbie, who has somehow been influenced by Roger Moore. "I love that classic, early Seventies James Bond look. I hate labels that are in your face. Firetrap and Quicksilver are pretty cool brands, but I don't think much of Ralph Lauren because everyone's got that little polo shirt on down the pub." In fact he spends nearly twice as much on clothes as any of the girls.

When it comes to glam, David's got it sussed. "University will be the only time in my life when I will be allowed to experiment with my hair," says the man who loves glitter. When he first came to college he was painfully shy, so as soon as he got the hang of being extrovert it went to his head. "My hair's not really about expressing myself," he explains. "It's more the fact

THIS STUDENT LIFE



SPRING TERM, WEEK 9 AT THE MANCHESTER STUDENT HOUSE

that I just get bored with having the same hairstyle so I just do something different and dye it another colour."

Youth culture is now about subtle differences, not tribal uniforms. The days of punks,

rockers and Brit Pop boys seem gone forever. "If a girl is wearing Kookai or Morgan you know she's pretty rich," explains David. "And then there are the rude boys with their Camper jackets, baggy jeans and caps. But none of it is really obvious."

"That Brit Pop thing was really pretentious. Now it's cool not to be influenced by any one trend." So does he enjoy dressing up? "I spend quite a lot on clothes and I've got a bit of a shoe fetish. I like laced, square-toed ones with a little bit of heel on them. I'm quite individual. I don't really care what others think."

Ian reckons his almost waist-length hair is less of a style statement, more of a dare. "I had a tragic basin haircut before I came to university," he says. "I've kept my hair long because my friends said, 'University is the only chance

you'll get to grow it. When you get a job, you'll have to get it all chopped off.' So I've kept it. Now it's part of me."

He's also hates designer labels. "I bought an Yves Saint Laurent shirt for £80, and it's falling apart," he says indignantly, "and something similar from B&S which is still amazing." He reckons you can spot Mancunians a mile off. "You can tell who's a student in this town because they're nearly always scruffy, and you can tell people who come from Manchester because they have this walk. It's like a strut."

Rosie and Tash don't seem to own a skirt between them and don't have the time or money to care about fashion. "Leona's got a gorgeous figure," says Rosie. "So she's more fashionable than either Tash or me. I don't wear skirts ever, and I don't wear heels. If I'm going to the pub I'll just wear what I

put on when I woke up. Clothes are just not the big deal that they used to be. If I had £100 to spend I'd shop in Warehouse or Oasis, but most of the time I'm in bargain shops."

"I'm always worried about my stomach," says Tash, patting her tummy under a padded jacket. She's just grateful that her tomboy look is back in style. "Clothes are less glamorous than they used to be when girls wore little tops, mini-skirts or pedal pushers to House and Garage clubs. I never felt 100 per cent in them because there were no pockets and they weren't very useful. If I was tall and skinny I would wear more fluffy clothes. But now there's so much more of a drum 'n' bass scene in Manchester, combat trousers and trainers are fashionable again. And they're so much more practical." Prada and Gucci, eat your heart out.

Royal Ballet's faux pas

Dance Bites tries to build regional audiences for modern dance. But is it really working? By Nadine Meisner

After years in the doldrums, the Royal Ballet is bristling with public optimism. They have a luxurious new home waiting for them in the redeveloped Royal Opera House; a go-getting American executive director, Michael Kaiser, famed for his nifty *pas de deux* work in raising collapsed ballet companies back on their feet; and New Labour status as reformed toffs, flinging open their doors to your average person on the street. Perhaps Kaiser is indeed so adept he can get money to pour out of taps. But he will also need to sort out the Royal Ballet's many other problems: their inaccessibility to most of the tax-paying country; their stuffy image; and the shortage of talent to choreograph the future repertoire.

Now in its sixth season, Dance Bites is the Royal Ballet's attempt to address these problems. Each year, for a fortnight, the company divides into two and performs in medium-sized theatres round the country. This replaces their previous, exorbitantly expensive touring to large cities, with full company, orchestra and stage sets. Dance Bites was also conceived as a cost-effective way of killing two birds with one stone: not only to travel outside London, but to encourage younger choreographers by showcasing their work. In the estimation of the company's administrative director, Anthony Russell-Roberts, it has been a success. In my estimation, it has been ineffectually implemented and counter-productive.

Superficially, Dance Bites is the plucky ingenious scheme of an organisation strapped for cash. And it is preferable to the earlier custom of flinging novice choreographers on to the grand Royal Opera House stage, to make their mistakes in a blaze of publicity. But from what I have seen, audiences for Dance Bites have dwindled. Past programmes have often featured work not ready to be shown to a paying public, while the glossy trappings of live music and stage design looked inappropriately extravagant. This present tour is stricter in choice of choreographers, and more sober in presentation. But I still doubt that it will win audiences to the cause of modern ballet.

This is because of a mismatch between the product and the consumer. Russell-Roberts says: "It would be an insult to regional audiences to suggest they were less sophisticated than in London." As someone from a village in Cumbria, I agree. Moreover, during the past few decades, the most avant-garde choreographers have regularly toured the regions. "We are aiming at a public who would appreciate new choreography, leavened with a masterwork like Ashton's *Monotones*," he says. "We state clearly what the programmes are."

But the modern-minded audiences, who buy tickets to see Siobhan Davies, stay away from Dance Bites. What Dance Bites attracts are the blue-rinses and the ballet-pupil bun heads who expect recognisable classicism, technical bravura, and melody. They expect this because they see the name Royal Ballet.

True, the publicity says "Dance Bites" in bigger lettering, but that doesn't prevent individual theatres from plastering large "Royal Ballet on Tour" stickers across the posters. So the right audience doesn't come and the company's marketing has failed to redress this. Given that many of the towns have colleges and universities, where are the students?

I saw this year's two Dance

It's a mismatch of product and consumer: of experimental dance and a largely blue-rinse audience

Bites programmes in Northampton and Cambridge. In Northampton, the familiar item was a revival of David Bintley's *Galanteries*, a tastefully calibrated suite of dances to Mozart. In Cambridge, everything was overshadowed by Ashton's *Monotones*, as seamlessly serene, pared down and strange as its Satie music. Darcey Russell's long, poised lines folded and stretched beautifully in the plastic of the second trio to *Trois Gymnopédies*.

Russell led Mark Baldwin's *Towards Poetry*, performing a quirky *pas de deux* with Nigel Burley and a long solo that displayed her yawning jump. Her deliberate, challenging air of narcissism slotted into the piece's eccentric atmosphere, but what significance lay behind it all remained a secret between Baldwin and his composer, Julian Anderson.

William Tuckett's *Love's Fool*, in which Luke Heydon's modern-day Cupid gives office romance a helping push, was entirely clear thanks to the programme note, although the overall effect was two-dimensional. Much of the movement concentrated on the feet, so it was frustrating that these were hidden from many by Cambridge's appalling sightlines.

After *Galanteries* in Northampton, the radicalism of Cathy Marston's *Tidelines* was a shock. Choreography, design and music confront each other prismatically. Peter Sculthorpe's score superimposes layers, and mirrors reflect the dancers' silhouettes. Sometimes they just stand around, sometimes

they move in eddying and interfacing patterns, echoing the back projection of coloured liquids.

Jonathan Cope and Chloe Davies perform an entrancing *pas de deux* of unexpected but beautiful lifts which ends the piece abruptly and inconsequentially as if Marston couldn't think of a way of rounding off. Ashley Page's trio *Soft Underbelly* went through the variations of combining one woman and two men fluently and unremarkably.

Michael Corder's *Masquerade* offered no surprises either, although it had an articulate freshness and exuberance, enhanced by Anthony Ward's ravishing acid-drop costumes. Using Stravinsky's suite from *Pulcinella*, Corder's plotless dances retain a sense of the *commedia dell'arte* characters. This brings nice choreographic contrasts and allows Peter Abegglen and Mara Galeazzi to be bright and teasing as Harlequin and Columbine.

This year's Dance Bites focuses more on proven choreographers. But even established talents can produce misses. The task of watching experiments *en masse* can make music seem attractive. This heavy-duty programming is best suited to a small, low-profile performing space where the odds can come and go discreetly. And the good news is that this will happen, with the Royal Opera House's new studio theatre.

Gossip claims that this is the last Dance Bites. Russell-Roberts says he doesn't yet know but if medium-scale touring is to continue, the Royal Ballet should take half a leaf from the English National Ballet's book. ENB's artistic director, Derek Deane believes in pragmatism. "I see them as an opportunity, actually, to increase audiences by reaching people who might not normally go to the bigger theatres, but who are prepared to go to smaller ones." Catchily entitled *Tour de Force*, his two programmes, (starting later this month), reverse the Dance Bites balance by splicing familiar extracts with a dash of the new - in both cases provided by the company's Christopher Hampson.

With a smaller subsidy than the Royal Ballet, the ENB has tighter box-office considerations but *Tour de Force* certainly attracts full houses. "I want to create audiences, not alienate them. You've got to mix and match programmes to entertain as well as challenge," is Deane's recipe. "Programmes of ballets they've never heard of are not going to get people in. You've got to create interest, not use the occasion as a glorified choreographic workshop." He denies that he is referring to Dance Bites but I, for one, don't believe him.

Dance Bites tours to Cornwall, High Wycombe, Dorford and Woking. *Tour de Force* runs from 22 Mar to 10 Apr



Darcey Russell, centre, in Frederick Ashton's *Monotones*

Laurie Lewis

Hall to play for

POP

LYNDEN DAVID HALL
BRIGHTON CENTRE

WHETHER playing mean blues or boogie on the guitar, or singing his own songs about carnal love, God or absent fathers, Lynden David Hall is excellent. With a repertoire like that, he would be garlanded with praise if he were a white American in the alternative country mould, and signed to an independent label called something like Dog Do. Instead, he's a black British soul act on EMI. Not only is his music written in a foreign language - that of American R'n'B - but he is also the latest in a long line of Brit-souls who have had to deal with premature comparisons with the great, and usually, the dead, of the past. Despite releasing two killer singles from his superb debut album of last year, *Medicine 4 My Pain*, Hall's success was still not assured - the album was even repackaged after the first cover was deemed to be too dark.

This opening date of his first major national tour was so good, however, that he looks sure to prevail in the end. With a nifty four-piece band, two backing singers, and tunes from the album already familiar to most of the audience, Hall was brilliant from the very first note, yet just got better with each number. Though his niche is Nu Classic Soul in the manner of Maxwell, D'Angelo and Chicco DeBarge, Hall is the equal of any of them.

He gains extra credibility from his musicianship - he wrote, produced or co-produced and performed almost everything on the album himself - and his love-god credentials, which are substantial. Tall, rangy and shaven of head, Hall more than looks the part, but he's also sufficiently charming and good-humoured not to threaten too many boyfriends. When he swaps his electric guitar for an acoustic, he also reveals a new persona, projecting an endearing vulnerability on songs such as the beautiful "Do Angels Cry" and "Crescent Moon". A wonderfully lubricious version of what should have been his big hit, "Sexy Cinderella", ended the show. All in all, Hall was fantastic. He could be the new Al Green. Whoops.

PHIL JOHNSON

To 18-19 March, when he plays London's Shepherd's Bush Empire (0171-771 2000). A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper

You know when you've been tango'd

GIDON KREMER's scholarly but passionate interpretations of the "new tango" music of Astor Piazzolla (1921-92) have been a runaway success. The CDs and tours appeal to a need for "light music" with intellectual depth for "art music" with emotional content.

Tuesday's concert had a more classical, chamber-music ambience than the more gutsy *Hommage à Piazzolla* or *El Tango* (or the composer's own recordings). The evening began with the leader playing solo, followed by some trio pieces and then the full quartet. Yet despite the absence of piano and double bass, Kremer's colleagues generated a remarkable amount of rhythmic heat in "Adios Nonino" (which the composer's band,

CLASSICAL

TANGO!
KREMERATA QUARTET
QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
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with violinist Fernando Suarez Paz, recorded on the *Live in Wien* album) and the beguiling "Milonga per Tre." This featured taut Lithuanian dancer, Egle Spokaitė, thin as a whip in green culottes, spotlighted while the musicians played from the corners of the stage.

Argentine bandoneón player, Marcelo Nisimman, opened the second set with a heart-rending solo version of "Oblivion", immediately followed by a couple of duets with Kremer; sentimental con-

versations full of nostalgia for a collective memory nobody there could have possibly experienced. The dramatic "Jeanne y Paul" required Kremer to counter Nisimman's wheezy beast of an instrument with wild noises and percussive clicks from his guernier.

Despite Kremer's declared passion for the music, one sensed he was having fun with the exaggerated emotions of Piazzolla's more cheesy back catalogue. Since *nuevo tango* = tango + tragedy + comedy + *kilombo* (whorehouse), as Piazzolla himself informed us on *Zero Hour*, this might be an example of cheap music ageing gracefully into a happy long after-life: what looked like nicotine stains turn out to be gold leaf.

For the final section of the concert, all five musicians took to the stage to perform *Five Sensations* for bandoneón and quartet, the stunning late 1980s collaboration commissioned by the Lincoln Center for the Kronos quartet, with Piazzolla himself. Kremerata's reading of this was faultless, but the star was Nisimman, an enigmatic half-smile playing around his lips as he coaxed chromatic impossibilities from the tangle of buttons and fingers at his left hand and lower throatier lines from the right, occasionally exchanging some private joke by eye contact with the pretty viola player.

The sensations of the five movements - "Asleep", "Loving", "Anxiety", "Despair", and "Fear" - were countered by the



Gidon Kremer

smiles and concentrated expressions of pleasure on the faces of the audience in the packed hall. Mood swings, but no depression: Kremer's bitter-sweet solo melodies in "Despair" sailed over the bandoneón chords before the

lower strings entered for a glorious chorale, and "Fear" concluded the recital on an up tempo burst of energy. Superb intonation, dynamics and timing, plus the ensemble's easy virtuosity, made this feel like the last night of a tour, rather than the second.

And how exciting to hear an unamplified band sounding this good in the QEH acoustic - the internal balance of strings and bandoneón was a masterclass of musical mixing. For the encore, all six performers returned for Nisimman's extra-melodramatic arrangement of "Adios Nonino", with virtuosic solos from Kremer and dancer Spokaitė, haunting the stage like a green, Giacometti ghost. Sensational.

JOHN L. WALTERS

The voice of the 19th century

IN WHAT sounds like a neo-classicist's manifesto, Goethe wrote that "only in limitation is mastery revealed, and law alone can give us freedom", so how he might have reacted to Hugo Wolf's ardently melodramatic setting of Rilke's famous "Kennst du das Land" is a matter for speculation. Like many other songs in Saturday evening's QEH recital, devoted to settings of lyrics from his novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, it went far beyond the poet's narrow vision of the proper partnership of words and music.

Yet whatever the limits of his

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musical judgement, his famous vanity might well have been touched by the artistry shown in devotion to his texts, as performed by the soprano Solveig Kringelborn, the baritone Thomas Allen and the pianist Roger Vignoles, with Samuel West reading from the novel. If literature's function is to uncover hidden springs of feeling in its readers, then Schubert's

impassioned musical response to "Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen", or Schumann's to "Heiss mich nicht reden", must count as important documents in their composer's own biographies.

With Schumann, especially, it was a case of richness of accompaniment, splendidly realised by Vignoles in the spread chords of the harpist's songs. As for richness of harmony, that belonged not just to Schubert, Schumann and Wolf but also to Liszt. In his versions of "Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh" and "Freudvoll und leidvoll", the floating tonality that in his

symphonic poems can sometimes lead to the impression of introductions to introductions, became a deftly controlled expressive tool of which even Goethe might have approved. But in many ways the laurels went to the settings by Carl Loe, in his "Gutmann und Gutweib", the Bachian accompaniment brilliantly directed the extensive tale-telling to its punch line. And for singers, his version of "Erk König" must surely offer more dramatic breaks than Schubert's.

The second instalment of the South Bank's Goethe: Life, Love and Music weekend

began with Beethoven's *Egmont* overture, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment agile and buoyant under Mark Elder's direction.

From pageantry, the mood changed to that of despair then consolation in the flowing lines of Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, the men of the Philharmonia Chorus quietly supporting the nobly rendered vocal line of the mezzo Jane Irwin.

With the tenor Justin Laverder the men returned towards the close of the second half, singing the "chorus mysticus" that sublimely ends Liszt's neglected *A Faust Symphony*,

surely a necessary part of any celebration of Goethe's unique achievement. Thanks to Elder's complete grasp of the work both in flesh and spirit, its longwindedness were scarcely noticed. What impressed were the quality of playing, fine woodwind solos in the Gretchen movement, and fierce, Mephistophelean unison strings in the last.

How revolutionary this piece must have seemed to its first listeners in the 1850s. To paraphrase Stravinsky on another subject, surely a solar plexus of 19th-century music.

NICHOLAS WILLIAMS

ROBERT HANKS ON TV



'The Grimleys' sadly assumed that there's something inherently funny about a Midlands accent

PAGE 18

NT

"Ostrovsky's marvellous work has the exuberant madness of the best Russian comedy."

"Anthony Page's wonderfully funny production"

"Frances de la Tour is on top form!"

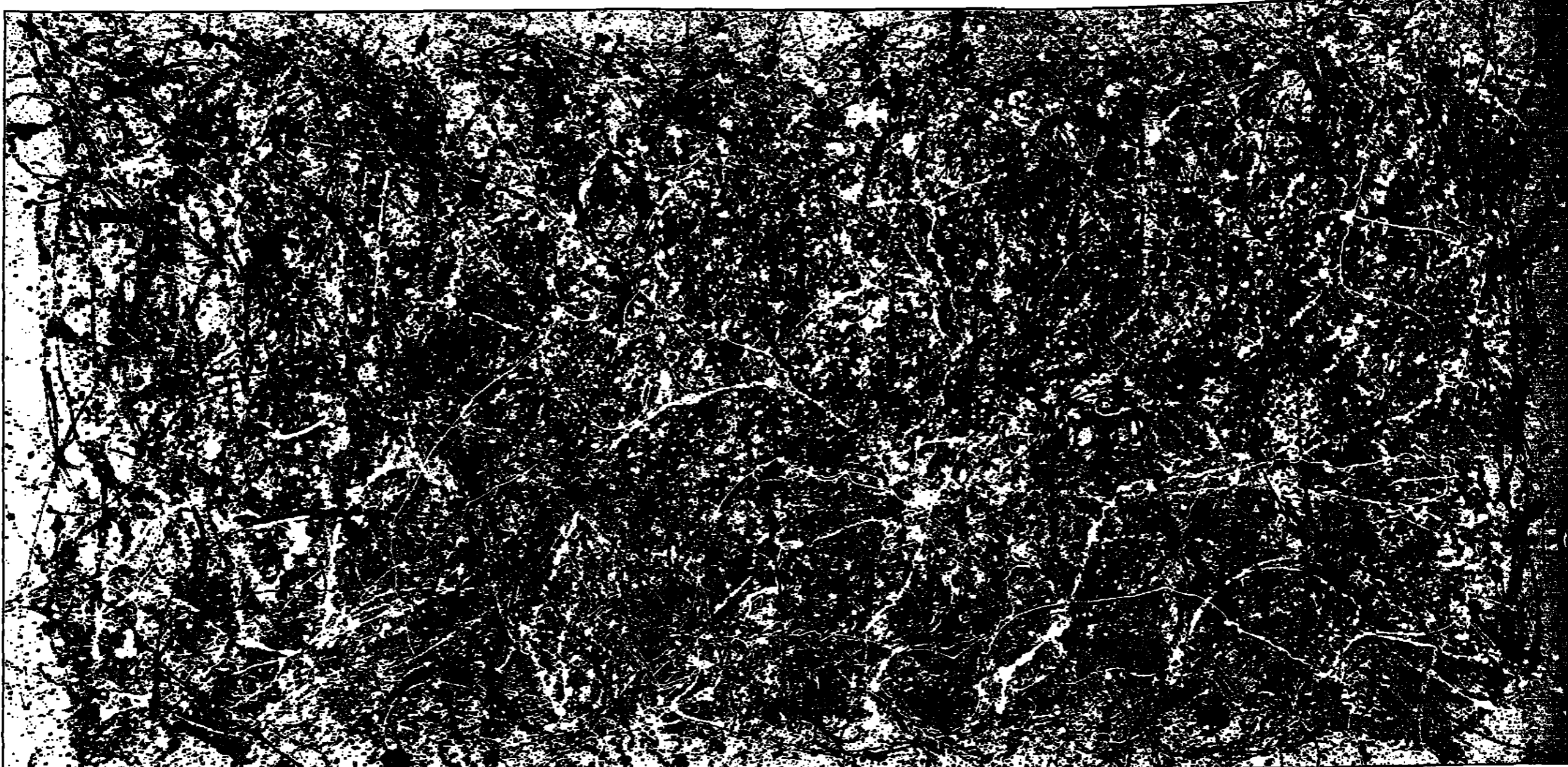
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One: Number 31, 1950; below: Pollock with the same painting as a work in progress

Front cover: Mellon Bruce Fund/above: Museum of Modern Art, New York

Dripping with significance

The latest Tate Gallery blockbuster went down a storm in Manhattan. What else do you expect from Jackson Pollock, the great New York Abstract Expressionist? His vast canvases absorb every big feeling in the world. But does that make them great paintings? By Tom Lubbock

Posterity time. Fifty years ago, Jackson Pollock was painting his masterpiece. A few years after that, it was all over. A couple more, and he was dead in a car crash at 44. Dead, and already great. His greatness, first put in currency by a 1949 feature in *Time* magazine – "Is he America's greatest living artist?" – had hung around Pollock ever since like a heavy cloud. And in this country, at least, the legend has lasted without the work having been seen too often. The Tate's retrospective is the first major show here for two generations. Might it clear the air a little?

There are grounds for suspicion, after all. Pollock's peculiar greatness is partly a historical thing. The conditions were propitious. Here was the United States: just won the war, richest nation, top of the free world, supremely confident. Whatever artistic talent it produced was going to benefit from this dominance; to be given – if remotely possible – the status of world leader.

Within US culture there was a role waiting, too. Great American Artist: position vacant. There'd been the Great American Novel (Melville) and Poem (Whitman) and Music (Jazz). But in the visual arts, there'd been no body of work that convincingly broke free or ahead of the European tradition. The frontier of modern art was still Paris, not New York.

You don't have to deal in active conspiracy theories here (even though "The CIA invented Abstract Expressionism" is a perfect charmer). Circumstances were such that the next big thing in American art was likely to get very big indeed. What's more, Pollock's work fitted the bill so well. Its temperament was free, raw, expansive, commanding, and it had pioneer spirit. But also it was – really was – highly original.

The novelty of the paintings Pollock made, in a barn out the back of his Long Island home, was partly in how they looked, and partly in how they

were done. Their compositions were "overall": they had no image, of course, and no governing design or obvious focal points. They abandoned handiwork. Dripping his paint from sticks and old brushes, Pollock substituted gravity for touch. The relationship between painter and painting was changed. The canvas was laid on the floor. It became an arena for action. What developed on the surface wasn't so much a picture as a record of bodily movements.

That's the textbook story, so to speak. But to praise an art 50 years on, in terms of its originality as such, isn't quite going to work. Originality is a relay race that nobody wins. One breakthrough gives way to another. Pollock's influence has been wide. For instance, the performance side of his action painting led into performance art. But that's hardly what's good about Pollock's painting.

And what we see in the classic Pollock paintings – works such as *Lavender Mist* and *One* – is an ambition that exceeds mere innovation. They're astonishing spectacles, swarming and exploding before our eyes. They're paintings that want to be more than paintings; that want to slip the surly bonds of art. He didn't want just to be ahead of the game. He wanted out. For a short while, he was.

What we're talking about, though, is a short while. A retrospective prompts an obvious question. Is it going to be a long build-up to a final breakthrough, rich in anticipations and approaches, but with all the earlier work only interesting for what it promises? Or is it going to be a full, if brief, career?

It was clearly a struggle. The Pollock myth emphasises the wild, violent, drunken, boho outsider. But the progress of this exhibition suggests another kind of individualism: a good, work-ethical, ragged, rich story. Talent-wise, Pollock started poor. The earliest paintings are turbulent art-school effusions, and the turbulence continues as Pollock gets heavily influenced by European modern art (Picasso, Miró, André Masson), and goes on being influenced – and figurative – for quite a time.



There's a lot of personal mythology stuff: jagged, writhing, doomy confessions of archetype and hieroglyph (he was into Jung). But among them, one or two paintings stand out. *Stenographic Figure*, done when Pollock was 30, is a high-spirited, light-hearted image of loopy critters. It was an important picture for Pollock's career. It caught Mondrian's eye, resulting in Peggy Guggenheim's patronage. But in itself, it's a one-off. It shows a side to Pollock normally hard to imagine: a sense of humour. It might have led anywhere.

Not that the other work of the early Forties shows anything like a clear trajectory. It's all over the place. There are some works which, in hindsight, seem to look ahead – such as the huge, long painting called *Mural* (1943) he did for Guggenheim. I don't myself get a big kick out of this acknowledged milestone, but its strongly rhythmic, highly elaborated callig-

raphy of dancing stick men can be seen as pointing to an overall abstraction. And *Eyes in the Heat* (1946), a very exciting field of swirling energies, with the paint delivered straight from the tube, seems on the very brink. But at the same time, there are pictures that declare he'll never get Picasso out of his system.

And then the dripping starts. It starts uncertainly. And though within a year or two it's reached perfection, these first drip-pictures, very hit-and-miss, let you see what this perfection involved – and see, too, what the work looked like to many of its first beholders. It looked like a mess, or again like a pretty mess. Quite often with the early ones, you really do get willful mess-making, and it's not interesting. Quite often, too, you get a pleasingly distressed surface texture. And both these impressions are worth holding onto.

Pollock sometimes wondered if what he was doing now was art. His critics, pro and anti, have sometimes thought not. The artist saw doodles and decor – "apocalyptic wallpaper" was the great put-down. The pros saw the pure, unmediated expressions of body or soul; a painting made in a trance state, with Pollock's unconscious or impulses marked down on the canvas. Obviously, this was partly what Pollock wanted. He wanted a spontaneous painting that bypassed the turgid symbolism of his earlier psychodramas and came straight from the deep psyche. He wanted pictures that – like some decoration – looked unmade and unauthorised, as if they had just developed of themselves. But the paradox of his achievement is that these things could only be done with a lot of artistry.

Pollock's act was a careful balancing act; a matter of holding things in tension, fine-tuning so as to keep all possibilities open. The classic paintings have multiple intimations, none of which is quite suppressed, none of which definitely arrives. There are – despite the "over all" talk – hints of an underlying structure, perhaps something quasi-figurative

and deeply buried in all the business. There are hints, too, of infinitely complex patterning. There are hints of complete chaos and randomness. There's finally a strong entropic tendency towards an absolutely inert homogeneity. And all these aspects shift one into another.

The result is work that's untraceable and ungraspable. It offers inexhaustible interest to the eye. It can be contemplated endlessly. It always offers something new. And if you're content for that to be what painting does, you can hardly ask for more. If, on the other hand, you want to give meaning to this intensely absorbing experience, you're taking a risky step. The great Pollocks have an unlimited appetite for significance. They gobble it up and ask for more. Every big feeling in the world can attach itself to them. It's another thing that made them such excellent candidates for greatness.

These paintings last, not for their innovations, but because they still stick in art's craw. Pollock's most memorable saying was his reply to being asked why he didn't work more from nature: "I am nature." It needn't have been a megalomaniac boast. It was no more than the literal, partial truth. Who isn't? His achievement was to turn art into natural history, to make human artefacts that have the fascination of natural phenomena: blank wonders, endlessly interpretable.

It has a limit. And having reached it, Pollock rather impressively stopped – treated it as an aberration almost. At the start of the Fifties, he (so to speak) re-wound seven years, went back to much the same kinds of picture he was doing before the drip-work started (some figurative, some less so), fell under the same old influences, did some more very interesting one-offs such as *The Deep*, got too drunk to paint at all, and crashed his car. There are many rather spurious romantic tendencies in Pollock's art and myth, but this late falling off is a vindication of them, and it baffles posterity's calm judgements. Briefly he had been visited.

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From Russia with ambition

Life on the street and in a psychiatric hospital has only served to inspire painter Sergei Chepik. By Ian Phillips

IN 1988, SERGEI CHEPIK received a visit in his Leningrad studio from the Soviet censors. The painter's first masterpiece, an allegory of the paranoia and horror of the USSR, entitled *The House of the Dead*, had just been rejected for exhibition four times. He should, they advised him, adopt a more "positive" attitude – something he had always refused to do.

Realising that there was no artistic future for him at home, Chepik obtained a tourist visa for France, shipped as many paintings as possible out of the country and arrived in Paris on 1 August 1988. Three months later, *The House of the Dead* won the Gold Medal at the Salon d'Automne. The following year another painting, *The Tree*, was awarded the Monaco City Award, and a one-man exhibition was held at the Roy Miles Gallery in Mayfair in 1990. Of the 102 works on show, only three were unsold. Critics hailed him as "Russia's foremost living artist", and "the new Repin". Margaret Thatcher commissioned a portrait from him, and Rudolf Nureyev

and Alexander Solzhenitsyn subsequently agreed to pose.

Chepik met Solzhenitsyn in 1995 on his first trip back to Russia. The visit also gave him with inspiration for his latest work, *Golgotha*, now on show at The Gallery in Cork Street, along with all the preparatory drawings and monotypes. "I really had the feeling that my homeland has been completely crucified by the terrible political, economic and social situation there," he told me at his Montmartre studio. "When I look at the current leaders, I ask myself whether Russia has a future, whether its civilisation will not simply be wiped out."

Golgotha's originality lies in the fact that Christ is represented only in the shadow of the cross. The viewer therefore finds himself in the position of the crucified, confronted by a crowd of on-lookers, whose expressions run from horror and pity to contempt and disbelief. The stifling midday sun and oppressive walls of the ancient city create an almost unbearable claustrophobia. Its impact is breathtaking.



Chepik's 'Golgotha'

It is not the first time that Chepik has depicted the Crucifixion. As well as a series of monotypes in 1987, he also completed a first version of *Golgotha* in 1989.

When we meet, he has just returned from the Venice Carnival, and a party scene in St Mark's Square sits on the

easel. Throughout the interview, he gets up regularly to touch it up. "Painting is a physical and intellectual necessity for me. I couldn't not paint, even if nobody saw my work."

He certainly seems to have been predestined to become a painter. He was born in Kiev in 1953, on Repin Street (named after the famous Russian artist). His father was a renowned painter. His mother is a sculptress and he asserts that "as far back as I can remember, I have always drawn". From 1971 to 1973 he studied at the Shevchenko Art Institute in Kiev, and then at the prestigious Repin Art Institute in Leningrad.

After graduation, he found himself literally on the street, as he spent nearly a year gathering the necessary papers for an artist's studio. Throughout that time he slept in rat-infested cellars, railway carriages and airport terminals. A doctor friend even arranged for him to live in a psychiatric hospital for two months so that he would have a bed to sleep in. "It was extremely unsettling," he admits, "but

at the same time, very profitable. It was a time which was very rich in terms of the people I met, and allowed me to frequent all sort of drop-outs. It really formed my vision of the world and formed me as a painter." The sketches he made of the patients in the psychiatric hospital would, for example, later form the basis of *The House of the Dead*.

Other formative influences include the work of his "masters": Rembrandt, Titian and Velázquez. Chepik does not shy away from comparisons with big names of the past. "An artist today must measure himself against these champions and must be as good, or what is the point?" he declares. "When I started to paint *Golgotha*, I knew I'd have to compete with the greatest masters."

How does he feel he has fared? "That's for time to tell," he answers. "As the years pass, either the painting will be remembered, or forgotten."

The Gallery, Cork Street, London W1 (0171-287 8408) to 13 Mar.

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HEALTH

The pregnant pause

Weeks of waiting for the results of prenatal tests can be traumatic. By Annabel Ferriman

When Polly Thornton was expecting her first child, she resisted having an ultrasound scan until she was 13 weeks pregnant because she did not want a hi-tech, medicalised pregnancy. At that stage, however, staff at the hospital told her that a scan was important and she relented. In doing so, she unwittingly launched herself, and her husband Alan, on to a 15-week roller-coaster ride of scans, tests and medical consultations, which only ended when Polly was six and a half months pregnant and refused all further tests.

The Thorntons' baby, Jessie, was born in March 1997, in perfect health and with no chromosomal abnormalities, but the couple's highly sophisticated, first-class medical care had turned the middle of Polly's pregnancy into a nightmare.

"When we went to that first scan, it was wonderful to see the baby move and to be shown the heart beat," Polly says. "But then the operator went quiet and fetched someone else. They both looked at the scan and looked grave. We asked whether there was a problem and they were evasive. We had to go back to the clinic and talk to a doctor."

"He told us that the baby's nuchal fold, which is the skin at the back of the baby's neck, was abnormally large and, as that could indicate a chromosomal abnormality, we would have to come back for another scan. Because we were going on holiday to Tunisia the next day, the doctors kindly arranged for a second one later that day. It was a clearer, state-of-the-art scan."

The new scan revealed, in greater detail, what the first one had suggested - that the nuchal fold was much larger than normal. Polly and Alan were told that the baby had a one in four chance of having Down's Syndrome. The senior doctor recommended that Polly undergo an amniocentesis (see box), which would provide a definitive diagnosis. That test could not be done until she was 15 and a half weeks pregnant, which meant waiting three weeks.

"It was devastating. It was only 12 days after the death of my mother. We went on holiday but we could not think about much else. We kept noticing children with Down's Syndrome everywhere. We didn't know what we would do if the amniocentesis was positive."

After the amniocentesis, the couple, who live in Lewisham, south London, had to wait another three weeks for the result. Much to their relief, it came back normal, but the saga did not end there. At her 20-week scan, Polly was told that an enlarged nuchal fold could also be a sign of a heart abnormality, so she was sent to Great Ormond Street Hospital for a heart scan. That turned out to be normal, but the doctor still recommended regular scans up to birth.

At 28 weeks, however, Polly, who is a writer and co-author of the book *Downshifting: The Guide to Hoppy, Simpler Living*, felt she had had enough. "I felt our medical care had



An initial ultrasound scan to detect chromosomal abnormalities usually takes place at 12 weeks

Science Photo Library

A GUIDE TO ANTENATAL TESTS

AN EARLY ultrasound scan at 10-12 weeks can reveal major abnormalities, such as anencephaly (absence of the brain) or missing limbs, and can show whether a fetus is at increased risk of Down's Syndrome. In Down's pregnancies the nuchal fold (the skin at the back of the baby's neck) is enlarged.

Biochemical blood tests at 15-18 weeks include one that measures

Alpha-fetoprotein (AFP): high levels may indicate spina bifida, although nine out of 10 women with raised AFP levels are not carrying an abnormal fetus. The triple test (also called the Bart's test) measures AFP plus oestriol and human chorionic gonadotrophin: abnormal levels, taken together with the maternal age, give a risk factor for Down's syndrome. If blood tests indicate a high risk of abnormality,

diagnostic tests such as amniocentesis will be offered.

A later ultrasound scan at 16-20 weeks can detect spina bifida, hare-lip and abnormalities of the intestines, diaphragm and limbs. How much is discovered during a scan depends on the operator's skill and also the baby's position.

Amniocentesis is offered to women who have had an abnormal triple test, result, or whose early ultrasound showed

an enlarged nuchal fold, or who are over 35 or 40, and therefore at greater risk of having a Down's baby. A fine needle is inserted through the wall of the abdomen into the womb to draw out amniotic fluid for analysis. Chorionic villus sampling (CVS), in which cells from the placenta are drawn off, can be performed at 10-12 weeks, but there is a slightly higher risk of miscarriage than with amniocentesis.

been good and the doctors felt that they were acting in our best interests. But by this time I had had five scans and wanted to feel like a normal pregnant woman."

Polly's experience is far from unique and raises an important question. How can the process of offering women screening tests for foetal abnormality be organised to minimise the trauma and stress?

Ms Josie Dimavicius, director of the charity Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC), does not believe that it is possible to run a system that does not raise anxiety. "Anxiety is part of the testing process," she says. "Once an ultrasound operator has seen something on a scan which is a variation of the norm, that information belongs to the woman. It would be wrong to simply put it in the notes and not tell her. Unfortunately a lot of the abnormalities are what are known as 'soft markers' - they are associated with certain conditions but are not diagnostic of them. Many are of un-

certain significance."

Ms Dimavicius believes that the main way of relieving stress to parents is by providing information and time to listen to their worries. Her charity provides a 24-hour helpline which people can ring.

The doctor who pioneered the measuring of the nuchal fold as a screening test is Professor Kypros Nicolaides, professor of foetal medicine at King's College Hospital, London. He still believes it is a useful test but now recommends that it is used in combination with two other measurements - the age of the mother and the presence of certain hormones in the blood. Taken together, these measurements provide a reliable indicator of which mothers should go on to have an amniocentesis test.

"This combination of tests will detect 90 per cent of babies with Down's Syndrome," Professor Nicolaides says. The majority (19 out of 20) of mothers who go on to have an amniocentesis in these circumstances

will discover that they are expecting a normal child, but it considerably reduces the number of amniocenteses you have to do to pick up the vast majority of babies with Down's Syndrome, he explains.

Is there any way doctors can pick up chromosomal abnormalities without subjecting such a large number of women to an amniocentesis test? Professor Charles Rodeck, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at the University College London Medical School, thinks so. The future may lie in combining the results of the 12-week ultrasound scan with the blood tests now done at 15 weeks (the triple test) to detect abnormalities. "That way you should get a good detection rate for abnormalities and a lower false positive rate. In other words, fewer women would have to go on to have an amniocentesis."

Professor Rodeck adds that "with new rapid chromosome analysis, it is now possible to get the results back from an amniocentesis in 48 hours, in-

stead of the three weeks it used to take. Although rapid analysis cannot rule out every single chromosomal abnormality, it can eliminate the more common and more serious ones."

Polly Thornton thinks these developments will be useful steps forward. "The problem about being told that your child may have a serious abnormality and then not knowing for certain for many weeks is that you start instinctively denying your pregnancy just in case it never goes to term," she says. "All the weeks of uncertainty did not stop us bonding with our baby, but if it had gone on much longer, we would have been much less prepared for her birth."

Helen Statham, a senior research associate at the University of Cambridge's Centre for Family Research, says there is no way of avoiding the stress of tests. "The trouble is, most women have scans for reassurance. But any test that can reassure you also has the potential to alarm you. Otherwise it is meaningless."

Doctors must be impartial

A KINDLY doc sent me an interesting circular last week. He had received it from an organisation that called itself Media Medics. It was headed "Paediatric vaccination: Formation of a national media network", and what it contained struck him, and me, as being somewhat sinister.

The letter was about the MMR vaccination which, unless you have been living on the moon, you will know was the subject of a major scare a year ago. Research by doctors at the Royal Free Hospital, London, linked the vaccine, which is given in the first months of life and is then followed by a booster just before starting school, with both bowel disease and autism.

The ensuing rumpus, which was widely covered in the media, led to a slump in MMR vaccination, raising fears that measles, mumps and rubella infections could rise. The link has since been discredited, notably by a panel of two dozen specialists hastily assembled at the request of the Government's Chief Medical Officer, which concluded the evidence of harm was simply not there.

That, however, has not reassured thousands of parents who fear that the safety of their individual offspring is being placed second to the need to protect the public health. They smell, in a word, that there was a conspiracy.

Into this emotional maelstrom step Media Medics. In their circular aimed at doctors who appear on local radio and in the regional press, they say they are seeking to form a network of spokespeople who are able to respond to media enquiries on MMR "to encourage balanced and factual information" on the issue.

Volunteers will be supplied with a "comprehensive briefing pack" telling them all they need to know on the subject. In return for their time, a payment (unspecified) plus expenses, is offered. "Local people need to hear local voices that they can relate to, and trust," the circular goes on to conclude.

And who is sponsoring this public-spirited venture. I hear you ask? Why, Pasteur Merieux MSD, "the UK's largest supplier of paediatric vaccinations", the circular frankly admits. To redress the "emotional and one-sided manner" with which the debate about

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

MMR has been presented in the media, the manufacturers of the drug are proposing to pay tame docs, through Media Medics, to put the case for the vaccine.

It doesn't need me, a supporter of MMR vaccination, to tell Media Medics and Pasteur Merieux that they are shooting themselves in the foot. In a debate which is as highly charged as the one over MMR, the only surefire certainty is that anyone who takes hard cash for uttering an opinion on the subject will not be believed. Indeed, it is likely only to stoke the arguments of the conspiracy theorists.

When I put this to Dr Paul Stillman, signatory of the circular and the man behind Media Medics, he seemed abashed. He insisted he was against payment of large sums, which would be an inducement, but thought it reasonable to reimburse doctors expenses, apparently forgetting that the circular refers to the payment of an "honorarium" and expenses. He said: "What we do is, of course, not promotional. If it appears that way, I will be very unhappy." But what other way can it appear?

Tom Dick, head of corporate public relations for Pasteur Merieux, was equally cautious. He was unaware of the arrangement which may have been fixed through the company's marketing department, he said. The company wanted to put across the benefits of vaccination "because the anti-vaccine lobby tends to capture the high ground with emotive arguments", but he did not know of plans to pay doctors to do so.

Like most people, when I have a medical problem I look to doctors for independent advice. In matters of health, that independence matters more than in almost any other field. Doctors would be reckless if they were to squander it.

Dr Fred Kavalier will be back next week to answer your health questions

What your genes say about you

THE ERA of genetic testing is upon us, and one of the first uses to which it has been put is in prenatal diagnosis, to offer a woman the opportunity to terminate a pregnancy if she is carrying a fetus with a serious and incurable disease.

But few people really understand what genetic tests can do - and, more important, what they cannot do.

Part of the difficulty is due to the complex nature of biological inheritance and how it impinges on the health of the body. About 80,000 human genes make up the human "genome". Each person inherits two copies of a gene, one from each parent (except for those on the X and Y sex chromosomes). Each copy can be identical or can differ slightly but still function correctly - although they may produce different physical effects, such as eye colour.

Some copies can be so different from the "normal" forms that they do not function at all. Most genetic tests are based on being able to detect the presence of mutations that make these genes defective.

But having a single, defective copy of a gene does not

automatically result in the development of a genetic disorder. There are fundamentally three types of single-gene disorders. The first is when a single defective copy of a gene results in disease - a "dominant" disorder. In the second, both copies have to be defective to cause harm - a "recessive" disorder. The third is when the gene in question occurs on the X chromosome. These "sex-linked" disorders usually affect only males, but females can be healthy carriers. Haemophilia is a good example.

Scientists have discovered well over 4,000 inherited diseases caused by defects in single genes. Tests have been developed or are in the process of being developed to detect defective genes in blood, saliva or indeed virtually any body tissue, including hair.

A positive result does not always mean that a person will develop the disease. About 10 per cent of women who are positive for the breast cancer mutation on the gene BRCA1, for instance, never develop tumours. Similarly, a negative result does not mean a person will be for ever free of that disease. It may be that they carry,

Tests for inherited disorders pose ethical dilemmas. By Steve Connor



Good health: it's all in the chromosomes

or develop, mutations in another part of the same gene that is not picked up by the test. Another difficulty is that although genetic testing can tell whether a person is at risk of a particular disorder, it is a sad fact that practically all genetic disorders are incurable.

Genetic testing on adults raises other ethical concerns. Take, for instance, cystic fib-

rosis, the most common genetic disorder of white northern Europeans. It becomes increasingly crippling for sufferers during childhood; one of the biggest problems is a build-up of sticky mucus in the lungs, making breathing difficult.

Cystic fibrosis is a recessive condition, so a person can carry one defective copy of the gene in question without

any ill-effects. But if he or she has a child with another carrier, there is a one-in-four chance that their baby will inherit both defective copies and so suffer from the disease.

A test for the defective copy of the "cystic fibrosis" gene was the first genetic diagnostic to be made directly available to the British public, bypassing doctors. This caused consternation among government experts, who recommended that these over-the-counter tests should be properly regulated and controlled.

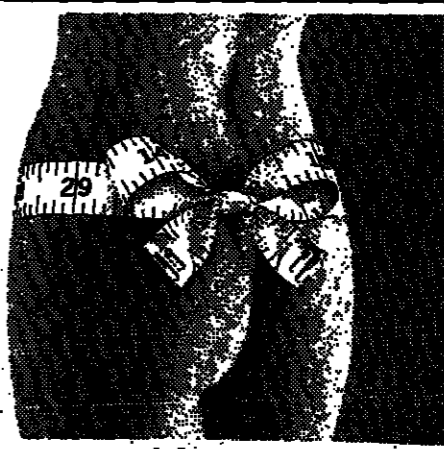
The Advisory Committee on Genetic Testing saw a "limited role" for such tests, believing that they should be made available to assess a person's "carrier" status only for inherited, recessive disorders, and recommended that people should have direct access to a genetic test only if the result had no direct health implications for the person being tested.

The problem really begins with tests to determine a person's future health. Many genetic disorders occur in adult life. The best example is Huntington's chorea, which results in slow physical and mental decline. Huntington's is not only

a late-onset disease, it is also dominant; if the test shows you have the mutation, it means that you are destined to die prematurely of a distressing, incurable illness.

The ethical dilemmas are exacerbated by the fact that a positive result impinges on other family members. If, say, a woman in her thirties decides to take the test because her father is dying of the disease, a positive result would also mean that her children are now at a calculable risk. They may prefer not to be burdened with knowing these odds.

As more genes are discovered, genetic tests will play an increasingly important role in determining risks of late-onset diseases. Some of these, such as Alzheimer's, heart disease and schizophrenia, may involve more than one gene, as well as environmental influences. Doctors of the future may be able to make good guesses about not just what patients are likely to die of, but when. It may help people to avoid a lifestyle that puts them at risk of premature death, but it will raise ethical concerns that we are only just beginning to comprehend.



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MEDIA

The reviled revolutionary

His management style is loathed and the great and the good have lined up against him. But John Birt's record as BBC Director General will stand the test of time. By Ian Hargreaves

Will Sir John Birt be remembered as the director general who disembowelled the BBC as a creative force and set it on the route to marginalisation? Or as the man who steered it brilliantly through the most difficult period in its history?

This is a momentous year for the BBC. It must appoint a director general to succeed Birt and the Government must decide how much money the corporation will have in the years beyond 2001, on the basis of a report on funding from a committee chaired by the city economist Gavin Davies.

Not in the corporation's entire history has a director general been so widely and publicly reviled. Last week, in a House of Lords debate initiated by Lord Bragg, peers queued up to attack the "croak-voiced Dalek" (Dennis Potter) and his "pseudo-Leninist managerial methods" (Michael Grade). Among the critics was Lord Husey, who was chairman of the BBC from 1986 to 1996, during which time Birt became first deputy director general, then director general.

Husey cited approvingly the opinion of Raymond Snoddy of *The Times* that "the BBC is drowning in policy options and perpetual revolution. Less money should be spent on all those areas not directly connected with programme-making", adding that he feared "for the future of radio against the monster television... I do not think that it [the BBC] has got its strategy right".

This portentous oration was heightened by the opaque anxieties expressed by Bragg himself and made melodramatic by the bloody dagger of Lady James, the crime writer and former BBC governor, who struck out against a management "too rigidly controlled, too bureaucratic, too secretive and too arrogant" and too inclined to communicate in "that curious bureaucratic jargon which bears little relation

to the English language". Some of this poison has its source in particular episodes. Husey, whose wife is a member of the royal household, objected bitterly to the famous *Panorama* interview with Diana, Princess of Wales; Baroness James was of the anti-Birt party in 1992 when the governors plumped for him as DG by a single vote.

I, too, am familiar with the scene of the crime, having worked directly to Birt during Husey's chairmanship in the late Eighties. In 1993 I published a pamphlet suggesting that by 2005 the BBC licence fee would face a crisis of legitimacy, as the corporation's share of the audience fell towards 30 per cent. I advocated a new form of non-profit, mutual ownership for the BBC, capable of more readily tapping diverse sources of income including public subsidy, advertising and subscription, and providing a firewall against the party political interference that nearly undid the BBC during the zenith of Margaret Thatcher's power.

Although I am sure the issue of funding and ownership of the BBC is not dead, it is clear that I was wrong about timing. But Birt's position now goes much further: that the licence fee is here to stay and should be increased. Having appointed Davies, the Government has in effect conceded the case, since Davies is on record with a detailed, if rather contorted argument that any sign of weakness in BBC audience share should be rewarded with more and more public money.

But the undeniable point is that John Birt is about to leave the BBC with a strong position in all the important new broadcasting technologies, and in its best financial and political shape for 20 years.

Birt's achievement arises from two formidable personal qualities: his ability to focus upon strategy, not detail, and to organise his own time and that of his central team to that purpose; and his political skills, honed in his days at LWT's *Weekend World*. Birt's style, as

methodical in political socialising as in analysing the competition, propelled the BBC through the battlefield of Thatcherism and the nowhere land of John Major, and is about to be garlanded by New Labour.

When Lord Husey says that Birt has the "wrong strategy" and should "concentrate on its mainstream channels and invest in them" (Ge Test cricket not 24-hour news on radio and television), he succeeds only in tying himself in knots, since he still supports the BBC's expansion into digital TV channels and Radio 5 Live. In any case, the big money is still at the core, you could buy a year of television's *News 24* and the whole of the BBC Internet service for less than the cost of Radio 3. The problem, which Husey does not attempt to solve, is that a BBC which has only a quarter of UK television revenues cannot bid for sports contracts in the way it did six years ago when the ratio was very nearly one to one.

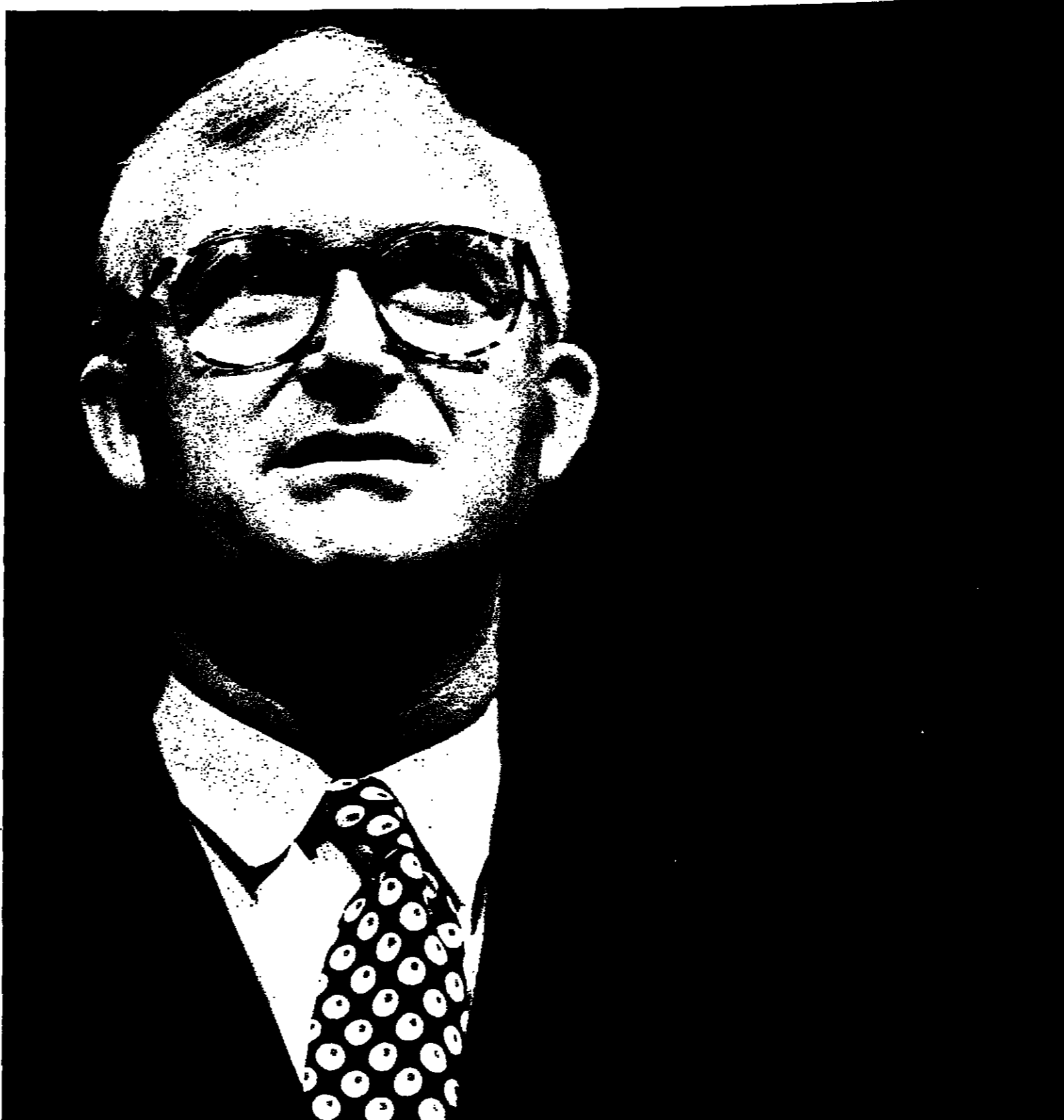
It is now plain that Birt has found the only strategy with any chance of sustaining the case for the licence fee into the next 10 or 20 years. By diversifying into new commercial ventures, he blocked the argument that the BBC is wasting the value of its archive; by going deep into digital television, he put the BBC at the heart of a major technology switch and opened the way for themed BBC channels on news, arts, education, history and science as part of the rich mix that rewards the licence fee payer. Most remarkably of all, Birt saw early on that the Internet would become a primary distribution channel for TV and radio. Today, BBC Online runs the most visited Internet services in Europe. By comparison, ITV is nowhere.

The effect of these moves on the politics of the licence fee is fundamental. The case against the licence fee is that it is compulsory and unfair, and that its legitimacy diminishes with the BBC's audience share as alternative TV and radio channels multiply. In practice, the BBC has contained the drift in its market share, while broadening the basic case for the licence fee by showing that even in the age of communications plenty, people want services of a type and quality not served up by the market. Indeed, the rise of the Internet strengthens this point in other ways, because here is a medium beyond the reach of effective regulation: the only way that governments can intervene is to support investment in superior content.

Lord Husey paradoxically conceded this point by noting: "when I arrived at the BBC I thought it had too much influence; I now think it has too little." This is precisely Birt's political masterstroke; politicians across all parties, bruised by Rupert Murdoch, want a big media player over which they have a different kind of influence, even though the BBC remains Britain's media giant. In short, New Labour is eating out of Sir John Birt's hand.

So why is Birt not acclaimed for this achievement? One reason is that the price of it has been to strip funds from existing BBC activities to help pay for the corporation's stake in the new media world. That has been painful for staff and has led to compromises on quality. But if the result is that the BBC is securely funded into the next decade, even the most scarred producer will eventually think the price fair.

The most difficult charge to answer is the claim that the BBC has become less creative,



John Birt's main weakness is not his management philosophy but the fact that he is a poor communicator

John Potter

and makes fewer good programmes. There is certainly no evidence for this in the corporation's record of winning industry awards in the Nineties – it typically carries off more than three-quarters in every contest, and BBC executives can list their major documentary and drama achievements to counter justifiable sneering at *The Vines* Show.

The bottom line is that the audience figures are better than John Birt expected when he arrived at the BBC. He foresaw the TV audience share falling to 30 per cent, but in fact the BBC will see out millennium night with more than 40 per cent of the United Kingdom's TV viewing and an astonishing 43 per cent share of all viewing and listening. Again, ITV has done much worse: its audience share diminished from 41 to 33 per cent between

1993 and 1998. For Birt's critics, the most unpalatable truth is that it is his loathed and parodied management style which lies at the very heart of his achievement. When he (and I arrived at Broadcasting House in the mid-Eighties, he found a constellation of committees and fiefdoms disconnected from the director general's office and even its board of management. It was a honeycomb with no queen bee. These arrangements may have been workable and perhaps even defensible in an era of abundant cash, when the BBC dominated British broadcasting. But by the mid-Eighties that era had closed. The fact that ITV persisted with a loose, ungainly federation explains many of its recent failures.

Today, Birt's central management team is well resourced (it accounts for 3.4 per

cent of BBC expenditure, not out of line with big private sector corporations) and capable of delivering strategic analysis and results at impressive speed. Novelists may not like the language, but that's the way they talk in business schools and board rooms. Birt's weakness is not his strategy, or his management philosophy, but the fact that he is a poor communicator – even those who work closely with him can feel cut off and demotivated, and most staff simply feel they do not know him.

At close proximity Birt is funny, clever, loyal and down-to-earth – but none of this is visible through the matrix of critical path analysis and programme cost per hour calculations. Like John Reith, Birt is an engineer who tends to assume that everyone else has a brain like his own. He has none

of Michael Grade's big showbiz talk or John Tusa's heroic gesture – but he's a much more skilled operator than either. It is perhaps a sign of his weakness with people that there is no obvious heir apparent within the corporation. But whoever gets the job will thank his or her predecessor for a position of strength unimaginable 10 years ago.

The least the new boss can do is to commission a decent artist to paint the outgoing DG – I suggest David Hockney – and to hang the portrait on the wall of the Council Chamber opposite that of John Reith. Let the two engineers stare at each other for half a century, because neither was loved at the moment of his greatest achievement.

The writer is professor of journalism at Cardiff University

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

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Guide to Sushi

From its origins in Japan 1,000 years ago, Sushi has become a worldwide phenomenon.

The Independent on Sunday's Guide to Sushi, published on March 14, outlines Sushi's history and culture, and explains the different varieties. Learn to prepare sushi at home with a simple step-by-step guide, and unlock the mysteries of this delicious, fresh and nutritious food with the *Guide to Sushi*.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Asahi

Can Evans do a Star turn?

Chris Evans has to persuade Ginger's shareholders that he can work his magic in newspapers. By Paul McCann

ALL THAT is really known about Chris Evans's plans for the *Daily Star*, should he take control of it, is that he would make Mike Soutar the editor. Mr Soutar is the man who turned *FHM* from a magazine selling 60,000 a month to one selling half a million plus. He knows about young men and he knows what motivates them to buy publications, so on paper he certainly seems like the man who could save the *Star*.

Weekend reports that Chris Evans's Ginger Media Group has been talking to the *Star's* owner, Express Newspapers, about swapping a 16 per cent stake in Ginger for the red-top were thin on details of what Ginger would do with the paper. All that emerges is the enigmatic phrase "a sport and television-led newspaper". The feeling seems to be that it can be updated into a daily "lads' mag" by one of that genre's inventors. But the very fact that Ginger

is looking at the *Star* casts some light on the current status of the Group's plans. Most people within Ginger Media are agreed that they have to make it less dependent on Evans. He drives the radio station, working on air six days a week on top of his *ITV Friday* show for Channel 4.

Although it was Evans's name which made the headlines, in reality the deal is Matthew Freud's. Evans's PR man, who knows a lot more about newspapers than Evans, has been conducting negotiations with Nicholas Rudd-Jones, managing director of Express Newspapers.

But it does show that Evans is serious about expanding Ginger as a media company with a diverse portfolio. Ginger has a production arm, making television and radio programmes, and a distribution arm, which is the radio station; he was looking for a third divi-



Evans is serious about expanding Ginger Media

sion, to be separate from Evans. That was to be the *Star*.

Holding Ginger back are Apex Partners, its minority shareholders and the venture capital company that lent Evans the money to buy Virgin Radio; and, to a lesser extent, Richard Branson, who took 20

per cent of Ginger Media when he sold Virgin Radio.

The fact that the "Ginger to buy the *Star*" story appeared in six newspapers' business sections on one day has led those at the centre of the deal to believe it was leaked when Apex consulted City analysts. Apex

vetoed the deal at a meeting two weeks ago, but did not make its veto definitive. Supporters hope that the fact that Apex discussed it with the City means it is still possible.

Apex is opposed at least partly because it is worried that a share-swap deal for the paper would dilute its holding in Ginger. But it must also be worried that it backed Evans in the first place because he knows about broadcasting.

Branson has said in the past that he has decided against owning newspapers because, as a public figure, rival newspapers would turn against him and his commercial interests. For Evans the risk is that *The Sun* would turn against him.

The Sun sometimes seems like the in-house newspaper of Ginger Media, so often does Chris Evans's antics appear in its pages. This is a deliberate strategy and one which means that *The Mirror* is usually anti-

Evans. If he used Virgin to promote his *Star* and the *Sun* got all his exclusives, *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail* could be added to his list of enemies.

For Express Newspapers, there has been talk of continued involvement and co-operation with the *Star*, which is a smoke-screen put up because the deal has gone public.

It is probably too late to try to make the *Star's* staff feel loved: circulation is down, staff numbers have been halved in a year and the general feeling is that management is embarrassed by the title's content and they want to be rid of it. In fact, under the Ginger deal the title would eventually move out of Express headquarters to a separate site.

The question now is whether Chris Evans and Matthew Freud want the newspaper badly enough to convince their backers that Mike Soutar can work his miracles again.

My life as a fly on the wall



THIRTY-NINE WEEKS

"I can't stop touching it, wiggling it, cuddling it, moving it around. ... I can't help it - I've never loved any part of my anatomy so much." A full-frontal pregnancy is all you see for most of this short, while Jean Lee strokes her naked tummy and talks about her feelings for the unborn baby. Both bold and mesmerizing, the shot allows us to invest the bulge with her emotions more powerfully than if we were just watching her talking.



LOO

A Scottish clan chief on holiday in Finland takes the camera from the cottage he's staying in to the outside loo. He's intrigued that the owners have decorated the loo with flowers, magazines, artefacts. "In this over-antiseptic world it's beautiful to find a place where nature is so completely respected, in all her aspects." It's a hymn to a side of human existence only ever mentioned on TV with disgust or as a joke.



SCARED

In a terraced house in Gwent a steel worker talks to camera about his fears. Tom Walts's gravelly voice provides an almost operatic accompaniment. "From 1979 until last year the only thing I've ever been afraid of was losing my Social Security. Since I've been working I've worried about losing my job." He talks of death, his love for his grandson, his belief in nuclear disaster, his indifference to the violence around him. It's a life laid bare in two minutes.

But it frees our contributors to tell us stories which wouldn't otherwise reach the screen, either because we wouldn't know to ask, or

Chris Mohr and Mandy Rose are the producers of 'Video Nation'.



MOUSE

A delightful tale of a Belfast GP, his children, and a mouse. It's told in one brilliant developing shot that Orson Welles couldn't have bettered. With the humane mouse trap in one hand and his camera in the other, Mark McClean keeps up a witty commentary while filming himself, the children's reactions, the fields, the house – then hands the camera to his son to hold over the bucket. We wait, with bated breath, to see the mouse emerge.



ONE WEEK

"So we actually met at the service station. I was in a bit of shock because there were so many of her relations there." "I didn't even know his name, just had this photograph and that was it." "I just started babbling on; I said sometimes I had these weird dreams, and she thought I'd said wet dreams!" Sarbjit and Jatinder, describing their happily arranged marriage, challenge media preconceptions about traditional matchmaking.



SMOKING

It's late at night. A Seventies hit is playing. A couple are arguing about her smoking. They're drunk. He: "I've given up arguing." She: "No, you can't. If you give up arguing you give up life!" Anyone who has debated important issues after a few too many will smile, but it's also very moving. "If you smoke for however many years, that's going to reduce your life by however many years. And that's however many years I'm gonna lose you."

**FULL MONTY**

The act of filming is always a construct, but that doesn't make it a lie. A West Highlands fisherman, Ian Mackinnon, puts on a show for us with an amused/embarrassed attempt at a striptease. He also alerts us to a trend and explores male vanity: "Somebody suggested some guys strip to raise money for the village hall... and it's struck fear into every male under 70: fear that he won't be asked [pause] and fear that he won't."



BUNGEE

This young property developer strapped a camera to his chest to film his first jump. It's about as close as you could hope for without jumping yourself. But shorts are most effective when they work on more than one level, and it's what Toby says as he hurtles through space that makes us connect with his exhilaration and sense of release: "If you're bored with your job and your woman has dumped you, do this - it's better than sex!"



MIRROR

A retired colonel spells out a word: "M-I-R-R-O-R, mirror. It's a ghastly thing to look, and see your face, what it is now, and what you feel it should be. One doesn't feel old, you know. But every time you look in that confounded mirror and see what age has done to your face, your body, your hands, that's what I dislike more than anything." It's all the more poignant for being delivered in the clipped tones of a man of his generation and class.

Chris Mohr and Mandy Rose are the producers of 'Video Nation'.

THE AUDITOR's report which last week cleared the Radio Authority of *Newsnight's* accusations of wrongdoing in awarding licences couldn't have come at a better time to rescue



UNBELIEVABLY, THERE are even more sinister forces than the *Daily Mail* opposed to Channel 4's gay programming. Last week C4's offices in London's Victoria were picketed by some burly men opposed to the screening of *Queer Nation*. Holding placards describing the station as "Queer Scum", they handed out leaflets which

Perhaps this is an idea for the future. As Sunday papers get bigger, their printing and distribution nightmares could be alleviated by staggering sales of the paper right across the week.

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Hanging up the peashooter

Anthony Howard, one of Fleet Street's great mischief makers, has retired. His only regret is that he was never made Ottawa correspondent. By Ann Treneman

Anthony Howard is now a grand old man of journalism. He is 65 and newly retired. He has just received the Gerald Barry Award for Lifetime Service in the *What the Papers Say* awards. But at heart he is still a mischief maker.

At first, he will admit this only grudgingly. But, I say, your first act of journalism - writing an anonymous diary as a national serviceman - was something for which you could have been court-martialled. "Yes, well that is true. Yes, Hmm."

Then he warms to the theme. He says that someone has to be the one with the peashooter. "You know the first question Lord Beaverbrook asked me when I went for an interview in, oh, 1958 or so, was 'Do you want to make mischief?' I found that very appealing. But I didn't really believe him. He wanted to make mischief for Gaitskill and Labour but not the Tories."

The conversation had strayed yet again into political territory. This is the way with Tony Howard. Just when you think you've left the subject for good, he wiggles it back into the conversation. He almost became a politician several times over. In the end, each time, he chose journalism - or journalism chose him.

"I'm not sure it was the right decision. What would I most have liked to have been? Most of all, editor of *The Guardian*." When he joined that paper in 1959, he was forced to give up being a prospective Labour candidate. "I can remember when I went up to Manchester saying to myself, as you do when you are 25, what would you rather be, a Labour cabinet minister or editor of *The Guardian*? I came down for editor. So I think I may have made the wrong choice."

The last time I saw Tony Howard

he was a deputy editor and it was more than a decade ago at *The Observer*. There he was known as erudite, gossipy and good at making a decision. You would take a problem or a page proof into his room - it never seemed an office - and he would pause and have a think before making his decision. He never tried to fob you off.

He believes that he was in with a chance to become editor of that paper. In the end, Donald Trefford stayed on and Tony says that he knew the game was up when Donald suggested that he might want to

'There was a move to court-martial me but luckily the commander said don't be silly, that's exactly what he wants'

go back to Washington. This was in 1988. "I said, you know I don't believe in going back. I'd done that in the 1960s. So I wasn't fired but the hint had been given."

It is fun to talk to Tony Howard. He has a wonderful memory for detail and he often comes up with exact dates or headlines or names from 30 or 40 years ago. He prepared for a career at the Bar at Oxford but then, as a national serviceman, couldn't resist writing for *The New Statesman*. It was his belief that no one in the officers' mess read the magazine and so he signed the last one. He quickly discovered that he was wrong. "There was a move to court-

martial me but luckily the commander, a man called Bernard Gussone - that is with a double s by the way - said don't be silly, that's exactly what he wants."

He was making £5 a week in the Army and was offered a job at Reynolds News, which was "pretty second rate" but paid well at £1,500 a year. He wrote a young man's view of Parliament and had been in the job a few months when Lord Beaverbrook summoned him. Several job offers came of this but the politics were wrong and he decided to approach *The Guardian* instead.

This seems to have been when he really began his career. He took a pay cut, left his flat in London and his desk at the House of Commons for the delights of digs in Manchester. He worked in a room with lots of desks and two telephone booths. No one liked to answer the phone. There were no named bylines.

He left in 1961 to be political correspondent for the *New Statesman* and was then wooed to *The Sunday Times* to be the first-ever Whitehall correspondent. This was a disaster, not least because Prime Minister Wilson had issued instructions that no one was to talk to him. "It was a very frustrating period. I occasionally got some tiny chipolata in the paper but really it was nothing."

Out of the blue *The Observer* asked him to be its Washington correspondent. This was where he made his name but it was his next job, as editor of the *New Statesman*, from 1972 to 1978, that he says was his own personal high point.

He then had another flutter with the idea of politics. "I did indicate I was available for a seat. It would never have worked. Thank God it didn't. If it had, I would have gone into the Commons in 1979 and faced 18 years of opposition." Instead, he became editor of *The Listener* and,



Anthony Howard: Torn between journalism and politics, his career could have taken a very different route

Tom Craig

in 1981, went back to *The Observer* for what would be seven years.

He says he has always been "bi-media". He went to the BBC for a few years and is still always popping up on *Newsnight*. He finds such instant commentating much easier than writing, which only gets more difficult. "I now find that writing a serious article is rather intimidating." Does he procrastinate? "Oh yes. I'll do other things first. Like

write letters. Or do my VAT?"

In 1993 he took his last job, as obituary editor of *The Times*. Legend has it that this was the job he wanted in what he calls the "evening of my days in journalism". In fact, he insists, the job he actually named was Ottawa correspondent - "a real deadbeat of a job". Whatever the truth, he has enjoyed editing the pages tremendously. "It became a more fashionable thing to be."

So what motivates him? Stories? Writing? Money? He has been proud of the odd story or two, though dislikes what he calls the "major row" school of journalism. Good writing is what he cares about most. He mentions Roy Hattersley and Alan Watkins. "But I don't think we have anyone today quite in the league of Bernard Shaw in his heyday or possibly Gore Vidal in America."

He has never gone anywhere for the money. He once shared a flat with Michael Heseltine and told him he did not see the point of making money from something like property development. "It is just boring." He is now ghosting Heseltine's memoirs. There may be another book, "something political". As I leave, I say he seems old-fashioned. He says he likes to think he's "modern". I find this so old-fashioned as to prove the point.

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For an application pack please send a 49p A4 SAE to: Administrator, ICA, 12 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH. Deadline for return of applications: Monday 22 March.

Applications: Monday 22 March.

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NEW FILMS

BELOVED (15)

Director: Jonathan Demme
Starring: Oprah Winfrey, Danny Glover
If film lives in a boldy naturalistic plane, prose inhabits an altogether more oblique and shadowy realm. And so Jonathan Demme's adaptation of Toni Morrison's multi-layered Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is always going to make for an uneasy marriage; hopping shakily between upfront dramatics and mysticism. Oprah Winfrey stars as an escaped slave struggling to cope with a visit from a bewitched voodoo child (Thandie Newton) who may (or may not) be the ghost of her dead daughter. Still, there's much to admire in *Beloved's* three hours of muddled-but-fabulist take on black oppression, its gumbo of pungent human drama with overheated horror-flick shenanigans. Heartfelt acting and a vibrant visual sense paper over all manner of cracks. West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village. And local cinemas

FESTEN (THE CELEBRATION) (15)

Director: Thomas Vinterberg
Starring: Ulrich Thomsen, Helle Mortzen
See *The Independent Recommends*, right.
West End: Chelsea Cinema, Clapham Picture House, Curzon Soho, Screen on Baker Street

KIMI AND ADAMS (NC)

Director: Kinsu Ouedraogo
Starring: David Mohiohi, Vusi Kunene
The first English-language offering from acclaimed Burkina Faso director Idrissa Ouedraogo, *Kimi and Adams* looks to spotlight a career

in transition. This African odd-couple comedy turns its back on Ouedraogo's traditionally stark, folk-tale milieu, and ropes in two professional actors in David Mohiohi and Vusi Kunene's squabbling adventures. But the director's soulful style is stymied by a script that is, at times, clankingly schematic and crudely drawn. The natural magic slowly seeps away.
Repertory: National Film Theatre

THE 39 STEPS (PG)

Director: Alfred Hitchcock
Starring: Robert Donat, Madeleine Carroll, Godfrey Tearle, Peggy Ashcroft, Lucie Mannheim
Filmed back in 1935, *The 39 Steps* stands proud as the most polished pic of Hitchcock's early, British period (although *The Lady Vanishes* comes awfully close). Thereafter, he would light out for Hollywood and his films would become both more glossy and more morally oblique. *The 39 Steps*, by contrast, offers classic *Boys' Own* adventure, riffing off John Buchan's source novel to produce a gadabout spy yarn that hurls Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll's handcuffed-together runaways into a Scotland that's bursting with oddball eccentrics. The film is as light and bracing as oxygen: all witty twists, throwaway lines and crisp observations as it builds towards a climactic crescendo at the London Palladium. Legend has it that Hitchcock insisted on hand-cutting Donat to Carroll before filming began, just so they could get used to being together, and then ran off with the key. Tsk, those auteur directors. Never too highbrow for the odd playground prank.
West End: Barbican Screen

Xan Brooks

GENERAL RELEASE

AFFLICTION (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Renoir

A BUG'S LIFE (U)

A *Bug's Life* sees humble insect Flik joining a flea circus in an effort to save his community from marauding grasshoppers. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

HIDEOUTS KINKY (15)

Through the backdrop of 1970s Morocco trends Kate Winslet's single-mum, her two daughters in tow. Winslet does well with a change-of-pace role and the child stars are startlingly good. West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Renoir, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road. Local: Well Hall Coronet

HILARY AND JACKIE (15)

Full-throttle playing from Oscar-nominated actresses Rachel Griffiths and Emily Watson, sustains *Hilary and Jackie's* warts-and-all biopic of the Du Pre sisters. West End: Curzon Soho Repertory: Phoenix Cinema. And local cinemas

HOLY MAN (PG)

Jeff Goldblum plays Ricky, a scuzzball TV executive. Fearful for his job, Ricky uses spiritual wanderer G (Eddie Murphy) as a frontman on his shopping show and sales go through the roof. G, in turn, teaches Ricky a few soulful lessons. Parts of *Holy Man* are very funny but the film never quite finds the right tone. West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (15)

Essentially this is *Shirley Valentine* with an Afro-American spin, but Angela Bassett works hard to make an impression among the slide-show of tourist-brochure visuals. West End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero. And local cinemas

JACK FROST (PG)

Michael Keaton stars as a self-obsessed blues-man who dies and gets reincarnated as a snowman. Formula family fun. West End: UCI Whiteleys, Wil. And local cinemas

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL (LA VITA E BELLA) (PG)

In Roberto Benigni's comedy, the writer-director takes centre-stage as a clowning Jewish shopkeeper in fascist Italy. He is spirited off to the death camps and strives to convince his son that it's nothing more than a game. West End: Curzon Mayfair, Curzon Soho, Odeon Kensington, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket. Repertory: Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas

LITTLE VOICE (15)

Holed up in her bedroom, Jane Horrocks perfects Shirley Bassey/Judy Garland impersonations. Bracing black comedy. Horrocks' vocal pyrotechnics, plus a marvellously weighted turn from Michael Caine push *Little Voice* through to the final curtain. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

LOVED (15)

Erin Dignam's *Loved* has been collecting dust on distributors' shelves for nearly two years, not because it's bad, but because it's so subtly unclassifiable. Robin Wright Penn plays an abused ex-girlfriend called upon by lawyer William Hurt to testify against her brutal former boyfriend. *Loved* paints troubled relationships for what they are: complex, charged and inextricably entwined. West End: ABC Piccadilly

THE OPPOSITE OF SEX (18)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Virgin Fulham Road, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

PAINTED ANGELS (15)

The angels are whores; the paint from the gloomier end of the palette. Jon Sanders' revisionist western revolves around a frontier brothel presided over by Brenda Fricker's no-nonsense madam. Earthy, naturalistic acting goes hand-in-hand with Gerald Packer's evocative visuals, though the resolutely downbeat handling makes it slow going at times. West End: Renoir

PERDITA DURANGO (18)

Alex De La Iglesia's quasi-sequel to Lynch's *Wild at Heart* is a strutting Tex-Mex caper, running on a kind of posturing wickedness. Rosie Perez acquiesces herself well as the vixenish heroine who abducts a pair of all-American virgins, while *Life of Fish*'s Javier Bardem glowers from beneath a comedy wig. It's camp, garish and annoyingly entertaining. West End: Metro, Odeon Camden Town

PRACTICAL MAGIC (12)

Essentially a sibling soap-opera with a dash of mumbo-jumbo, *Practical Magic* sees Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman cast as two mismatched sisters raised from a line of witches and being an unlucky man who swings into their orbit. West End: Warner Village West End

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U)

In planning his cartoon life of Moses, DreamWorks honcho Jeffrey Katzenberg envisaged it "painted by Claude Monet and photographed by David Lean". The end result winds up as *The Ten Commandments* by way of Joseph and *His Technicolor Dreamcoat*. West End: Empire Leicester Square. And local cinemas

SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Empire Leicester Square, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero. Repertory: Watermans Arts Centre. And local cinemas

THE THIN RED LINE (15)

See *The Independent Recommends*, above.
West End: Clapham Picture House, Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road. And local cinemas

THIS YEAR'S LOVE (18)

A cast of Britain's finest (Kathy Burke, Ian Hart, Douglas Henshall et al) weave through David Kane's Camden-set essay on urban romance. Although generally witty and well-observed, the film cranks what might have been a sublime one-hour teleplay into double its natural length. West End: Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea. And local cinemas

TITANIC TOWN (15)

All aboard for Troubles-hit Belfast, circa 1972. The IRA and British forces are taking potshots at each other in the streets. Civilians are dying in the crossfire. To the rescue comes Julie Walters' concerned local mum, who lobbies for a ceasefire and finds herself caught between the opposing factions. For a film implicitly about rage and waste, it's a little low on dramatic oomph. West End: ABC Swiss Centre. Local: Kilburn Tricycle Cinema

URBAN LEGEND (18)

Janie Blank's new stalk-and-slash romp clones *Scream's* ties, twists and in-jokes in much the same way that its campus killer mimics the crimes of popular myth. The result is a strangely bland and inconsequential bloodbath: fresh-faced teens meeting their grisly end in a drama as cold and schematic as a daytime talk show. West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG)

Riffing off the template of her earlier *Sleepless in Seattle*, director Nora Ephron ushers her favourite pairing of Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan through a contrived romantic comedy that's zapped out of its old-fashioned rut by a shrewd Internet plot hook. West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End. And local cinemas

YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS (18)

Another troubling X-ray of American mores from *In the Company of Men* director Neil LaBute, which looks like a carbon copy of the director's debut. West End: Metro, Virgin Haymarket. Local: Elephant & Castle Coronet

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS

THE FIVE BEST FILMS

Festen (15)
Danish director Thomas Vinterberg's superlative black comedy concerns the 60th birthday of a family patriarch who finds himself at the centre of dark secrets that unexpectedly emerge.

The Thin Red Line (15)
Terrence Malick returns to the screen after a 20-year absence with a hugely ambitious film about the battle of Guadalcanal. A war movie of a sort, though what that sort might be is uncertain.

Affliction (15)
Paul Schrader's bleak study in fatherhood and faith, adapted from Russell Banks's novel, stars Nick Nolte as a man struggling to escape the influence of his violent dad (James Coburn).

Shakespeare in Love (15)
This enjoyable romp suggests how romance fired Shakespeare with the creative inspiration for *Romeo and Juliet*. Joseph Fiennes and Gwyneth Paltrow (above) head a multi-star cast.

The Opposite of Sex (18)
Christina Ricci plays 16-year-old bitch-on-wheels Dedee, shooting from the hip and causing all kinds of havoc when she moves in with her mild-mannered half-brother (Martin Donovan).

ANTHONY QUINN

THE FIVE BEST PLAYS

Copenhagen
(Duchess Theatre, London)
Michael Frayn's profound and haunting meditation on science, morality and the mysteries of human motivation. To 7 Aug

Oklahoma! (Lyceum Theatre, London)
Widely regarded as the best ever, Trevor Nunn's glorious production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic (right) fully deserves its West End transfer. To 26 Jun

The Memory of Water
(Vaudeville Theatre, London)
Alison Steadman pulls off one of the funniest, truest drunk scenes ever in Shelagh Stephenson's fine play about sisters brought together for their mother's funeral. To 22 May

The Dispute (The Other Place, Stratford)
Marivaux's mordant 18th-century play about a sexual experiment is brought to life in this RSC/Lyric Hammermith co-production. To 20 Mar

PAUL TAYLOR

THE FIVE BEST SHOWS

Portraits by Ingres
(National Gallery)
Some of the most intense portraiture ever (right). Women: exquisite *mélange* of flesh and fabric, dreams of sex and money. To 25 Apr

Patrick Caulfield (Hayward Gallery)
Caulfield is a virtuoso of many styles, and this retrospective offers the range, notably those bacchanic outcrops flooded with translucent colour. To 11 Apr

Peter Doig & Udomsak Krisanamis
(Fruitmarket, Edinburgh)
Two painters collaborate. Doig's sizzling, curling, overloaded landscapes mix with Krisanamis's collages of cultural detritus and noodles. To 27 Mar

Richard Deacon
(Tate Gallery, Liverpool)
"New World Order": more curvaceous assemblages of wood, metal, glass and plastic - some gigantic, some humble - by the noted Eighties sculptor. What do they mean? No one knows. To 16 May

Disasters of War
(Wolverhampton Art Gallery)
Three ages of European war through the etchings of Jacques Callot, Goya and Otto Dix. Black-and-white visions from the blackest of times. To 20 Mar

TOM LUBBOCK

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC PANTON STREET

(0870-802 0404) • Piccadilly
Circus Elizabeth 2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm
Two Girls and a Guy 4pm, 8.45pm

ABC PICCADILLY

(0171-287 4322 (from 1pm)) • Piccadilly
Circus Buffalo 66 3.30pm, 8.15pm
Hammam: The Turkish Bath 1.25pm, 6pm
Love 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE

(0870-802 0402) • Leicester Square
Circus Piccadilly Circus Hideous Kinky 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.45pm
I Think I Do 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm
Titanic 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm
The Revue des Anges 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE

(0870-802 0403) • Leicester Square
Circus Piccadilly Circus Hideous Kinky 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.35pm, 8.45pm
I Think I Do 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm
Titanic 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 6.45pm, 8.55pm
The Revue des Anges 1.25pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD

(0870-902 0414) • Tottenham Court Road
A Bug's Life 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm
Little Voice 1.10pm, 3.50pm, 6.30pm, 9.25pm
You've Got Mail 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.25pm

BARBICAN SCREEN

(0171-638 8891) • Moorgate
The 39 Steps (1935 Version) 6.30pm, 8.40pm
You've Got Mail 6pm, 8.40pm

CHELSEA CINEMA

(0171-351 3742) • Sloane Square
Fanny 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE

(0171-488 3323) • Clapham
Coronation Street 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.45pm, 9.20pm
The Thin Red Line 1.45pm, 9.20pm
This Year's Love 1.45pm, 9.20pm
You've Got Mail 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

CURZON MAYFAIR

(0171-369 1720) • Green Park
La Vita e Bella 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.40pm

CURZON MINERVA

(0171-369 1723) • Hyde Park
Circus/Leicester Square Elizabeth 3pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm

CURZON SOHO

(0171-754 2255 (12noon-6pm)) • Leicester Square
Fanny 2.15pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.30pm
Hilary and Jackie 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm
La Vita e Bella 1pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE

(0870-888990) • Leicester Square
Meet Joe Black 12noon, 3.40pm, 7.20pm
The Prince of Egypt 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.15pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm

GATE NOTTING HILL

(0171-402 4063) • Notting Hill
Gate The Thin Red Line 1.10pm, 4.30pm, 7.50pm

METRO

(0171-734 1506) • Piccadilly
Circus Perdita Durango 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 7pm, 9.15pm
Your Friends and Neighbors 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

NOTTING HILL CORONET

(0171-727 6705) • Notting Hill
Gate Shakespeare in Love 2.45pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN

(0870-050007) • Camden Town
Beloved 7.50pm
A Bug's Life 1.15pm, 2.15pm, 4.35pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm
The Thin Red Line 1.15pm, 2.15pm, 4.35pm, 7.50pm
This Year's Love 1.25pm, 3.25pm, 6.05pm, 9pm
You've Got Mail 1.25pm, 3pm, 5.50pm, 8.25pm

ODEON HAYMARKET

(0870-050007) • Piccadilly
Circus Shakespeare 1.25pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON KENSINGTON

(0870-888990) • High Street
Kensington Beloved 8.30pm
A Bug's Life 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
The Thin Red Line 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
This Year's Love 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm
La Vita e Bella 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
You've Got Mail 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.30pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE

(0870-888990) • Leicester Square
Kensington Beloved 8.30pm
A Bug's Life 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
The Thin Red Line 1.25pm, 3.15pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm
This Year's Love 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm
La Vita e Bella 1pm, 3.50pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm
You've Got Mail 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.30pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
The Thin Red Line 1.20pm, 4.10pm, 7.45pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH

(0870-050007) • Marble Arch
A Bug's Life 1.55pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm
Enemy of the State 9.05pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm
The Thin Red Line 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm
This Year's Love 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm
You've Got Mail 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON MEZZANINE

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
A Bug's Life 1.25pm, 2.25pm, 4.30pm, 6.35pm, 8.45pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE

(0870-050007) • Swiss Cottage
Beloved 1.45pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.45pm
Little Voice 1.45pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 9.45pm
Shakespeare in Love 1.25pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.25pm
The Thin Red Line 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 7.45pm
This Year's Love 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 7.45pm, 9.25pm
Titanic 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 7.45pm, 9.25pm
You've Got Mail 1.25pm, 4.05pm, 7.45pm, 9.25pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
This Year's Love 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
This Year's Love 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
This Year's Love 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
This Year's Love 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
This Year's Love 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55pm
Elizabeth 1.25pm, 3.05pm, 5.35pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.35pm, 6.20pm, 9.10pm

ODEON WEST END

(0870-050007) • Leicester Square
Little Voice 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.55

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705-050007) BR: *Round Beloved* 2.30pm, 7.50pm. A Bug's Life 12.15pm, 2pm, 2.30pm, 4.20pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 6.50pm, 8.40pm. Holy Man 12.45pm, 3.30pm. Little Voice 9pm. Shakespeare in Love 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm. Step Into The Light 12.10pm. The Thin Red Line 12.45pm, 4.15pm, 7.45pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Urban Legend 6.45pm, 9pm. You've Got Me 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.30pm.

SIDCUP (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup A Bug's Life 6pm. Shakespeare in Love 8.20pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 8.15pm.

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-907 0171) BR: *Cricket* 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.50pm. The Thin Red Line 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 8.20pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. Urban Legend 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm.

STRAFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3365) BR/VC: *Stratford East* A Bug's Life 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm. The Thin Red Line 1pm, 4.30pm, 8pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. Urban Legend 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm.

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-902 0415) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

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ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS CINEMA (0870-907 0171) BR: *Round Beloved* 2.30pm, 7.50pm. A Bug's Life 12.15pm, 2pm, 2.30pm, 4.20pm, 4.45pm, 6.30pm, 6.50pm, 8.40pm. Holy Man 12.45pm, 3.30pm. Little Voice 9pm. Shakespeare in Love 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.45pm, 8.15pm. Step Into The Light 12.10pm. The Thin Red Line 12.45pm, 4.15pm, 7.45pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm. Urban Legend 6.45pm, 9pm. You've Got Me 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.30pm.

SIDCUP (0541-555131) BR: Sidcup A Bug's Life 6pm. Shakespeare in Love 8.20pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 8.15pm.

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-907 0171) BR: *Cricket* 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.50pm. The Thin Red Line 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 8.20pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. Urban Legend 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm.

STRAFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE HOUSE (0181-555 3365) BR/VC: *Stratford East* A Bug's Life 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm. The Thin Red Line 1pm, 4.30pm, 8pm. This Year's Love 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm. Urban Legend 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm. You've Got Me 12.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm.

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-902 0415) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

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ODEON (08705-050007) BR: Streatham Hill & Jackie 1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm. Shakespeare in Love 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.25pm.

THEATRE
WEST END

Ticket availability details are for today, times and prices for the week; running times include intervals. Seats at all prices. Seats at some prices only. Return only. Matinee: [1]: Sun, [3]: Tue, [4]: Wed, [5]: Thur, [6]: Fri, [7]: Sat.

■ **AMADEUS** David Suchet stars as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's acclaimed drama. Old Vic Theatre, SE1 (0171-928 7616/420 0000) BR/VC: Waterloo. Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 2.30pm, £7.50-£30, 180 mins.

■ **ART** Tom Manton, Danny Webb, Gary Olsen in Yasmina Reza's comedy about art and friendship. Wyndham's Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1736/867 1111) L: Sat-Sun, Tue-Sat 8pm, [4] 3pm, [7][11] 5pm, £9.50-£27.50, 90 mins.

■ **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST** Lush family musical based on Disney's cartoon version of the favourite fairy tale. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (0171-656 1888) L: Tott Ct Rd, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 2.30pm, £18.50-£35, 150 mins.

■ **BLOOD BROTHERS** Willy Russell's long-running Liverpool musical melodrama. Phoenix Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1733) L: Sat-Sun, Tue-Sat 8pm, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

■ **BUDDY** Musical biopic about the life of Buddy Holly. Strand Aldwych, WC2 (0171-930 8800) L: Covent Garden/Charing X, Tue-Thur 8pm, Fri 5.30pm & 8.30pm, Sat 5pm & 8.30pm, mats [1] 4pm, £10-£30, half price Friday matinee, 160 mins.

■ **CATS** Lloyd Webber's musical version of T.S. Eliot's poems. New London Palace Theatre, WC2 (0171-405 0072/404 4079) L: Covent Garden/Holborn, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [3][7] 3pm, £10.50-£35, 165 mins.

■ **CHICAGO** Maria Friedman and Nicola Davies stars in this hit Broadway musical. Adelphi Theatre, WC2 (0171-344 0055) L: Charing X, Mon-Sun, Tue-Sat 8pm, £16-£36 (incl booking fees), 130 mins.

■ **THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE** Dramatic thriller about the strange legacy of Stephen Lawrence case. Victoria Palace Theatre, SW1 (0171-834 1317) BR/VC: Victoria. Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [5] 2pm, [7] 4pm, ends 13 Mar, £5-£15.50.

■ **THE COMPLETE HISTORY OF AMERICA (ABRIDGED)** Reduced Shakespeare Company's teeny-bop musical. Adelphi Theatre, WC2 (0171-344 0055) L: Charing X, Mon-Sun, Tue-Sat 8pm, £16-£36 (incl booking fees), 130 mins.

■ **COPENHAGEN** New drama from Michael Frayn about the discovery of the atom. Duchess Theatre, WC2 (0171-494 5075/404 4079) L: Covent Garden/Holborn, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [5][7] 3pm, £10-£30, 145 mins.

■ **DEFENDING THE CAVEMAN** Mark Little stars in this witty and wise comedy about the sexes. Apollo Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5075) L: Shaftesbury Ave, Mon-Thur 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm & 8.45pm, £10-£25, 90 mins.

■ **DR DOLITTLE** Phillip Schofield talks to the animals in this new stage adaptation featuring Jim Henson. Puppets, London Palladium, W1 (0171-494 5075) L: Shaftesbury Ave, Mon-Thur 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm & 8.45pm, £10-£25, 90 mins.

■ **GREASE** Energetic stage version of the hit film starring Darren Day. Cambridge Earls Court, WC2 (0171-494 5075) L: Shaftesbury Ave, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 3pm, £10-£32.50, 150 mins.

■ **AN INSPECTOR CALLS** Stephen Daldry's widely-acclaimed production of Agatha Christie's thriller. Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494 5075) L: Shaftesbury Ave, Mon-Thur 8pm, Fri-Sat 8pm & 8.45pm, £10-£25, 90 mins.

■ **THE WOMAN IN BLACK** Susan Hill's chilling ghost story. Fortune Russell Street, WC2 (0171-494 5075) L: Shaftesbury Ave, Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4][7] 3pm, £10-£32.50, 150 mins.

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